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Linda Nolan remembered

'I've always believed in living life to the fullest'

Brave star dies aged 65

'My cheating husband had **THREE OTHER WIVES**'

BREAKING NEWS

KATE'S TOUGH NEW DECISION

Princess in remission... but torn between duty & family

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this week in bella

Welcome to Amandaland!

The *Motherland* spin-off is coming to screens

Three years after the BAFTA award-winning series *Motherland* came to an end, spin-off series, *Amandaland*, is hitting our TVs.

The brand-new BBC show will see viewers catch up with *Motherland*'s glamorous Amanda (Lucy Punch) – but this time, her life looks very different. Following her divorce, the blonde bombshell has upped sticks to South Harlesden – or as her estate agent calls it, SoHa (definitely not the area around Wormwood Scrubs prison).

With both Manus and Georgie now at secondary school, middle-class motherhood is also proving a challenge – with Amanda coming face-to-face with some modern parenting woes, including fake social media accounts, underage drinking and, of course, eco-anxiety. Adding to her neverending list of stresses, Amanda also must put up with her mother Felicity (Joanna Lumley), who is *always* around, and her stream of snarky remarks about her daughter's not-so-posh new life.

Set to air in February, this BBC series is bound to bring laughs galore. Frankly, we can't wait to tune in!

P21

P46

P27

TRINNY LONDON

P38

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Celeb news & gossip

6 COVER STORY **Meghan's new setback, plus *Strictly* bosses fight to save Tess and Claudia**
8 COVER STORY **Exclusive: Kate's tough decision ahead**
10 COVER STORY **A tribute to Linda Nolan after losing cancer battle**
12 COVER STORY **These celebs have been soaking up some winter sun**
50 Nicki Chapman: 'You still want challenges as you get older'
58 Running with the stars

Real life reads

16 COVER STORY **'My cheating husband had three other wives'**
18 COVER STORY **'I lost 6st so I could see my grandkids grow up'**
42 'I ran a marathon dressed as a penguin in memory of my wife'

Look & feel good

4 Lilac A-listers
21 Wrap up with these cosy buys
25 Retro bags
26 Perk up your peepers!
29 Vegan beauty buys
30 COVER STORY **Lose 5lb in 7 days with advice from Jane Plan**
33 The latest trends from the fitness world

Lifestyle

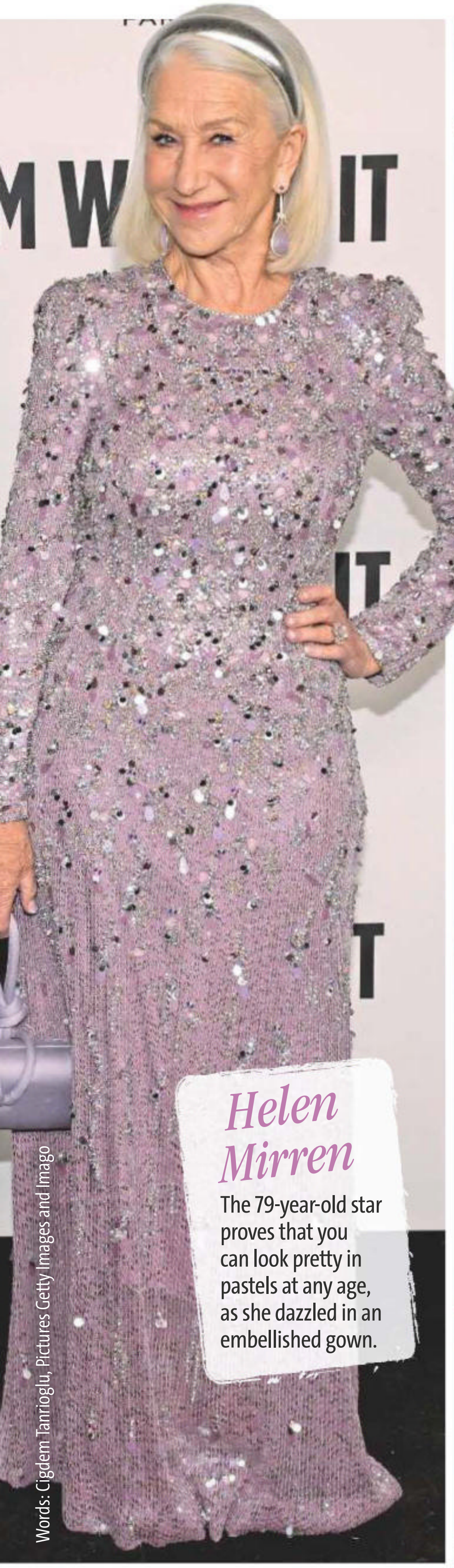
34 Cookery: energy-boosting vegetarian meals
36 COVER STORY **Better health: facial yoga**
38 Home trends: Scandi snug
46 Travel: days out with the dog

Don't miss

15 Bella debate: should you pay your kids a salary?
41 Have your say
44 Kate Medlin offers advice
45 Horoscopes
48 TV gossip, films, books and more
52 Prize puzzles and fun quizzes

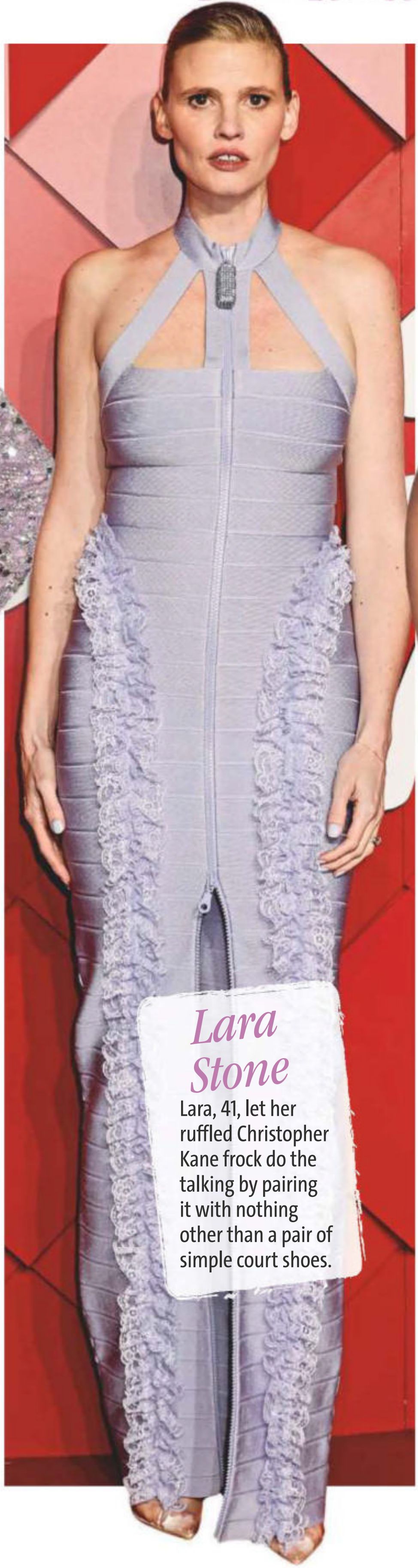
By Lottie Roberts. **Pictures** BBC. **Cover pictures** Shutterstock, Instagram

Lilac La



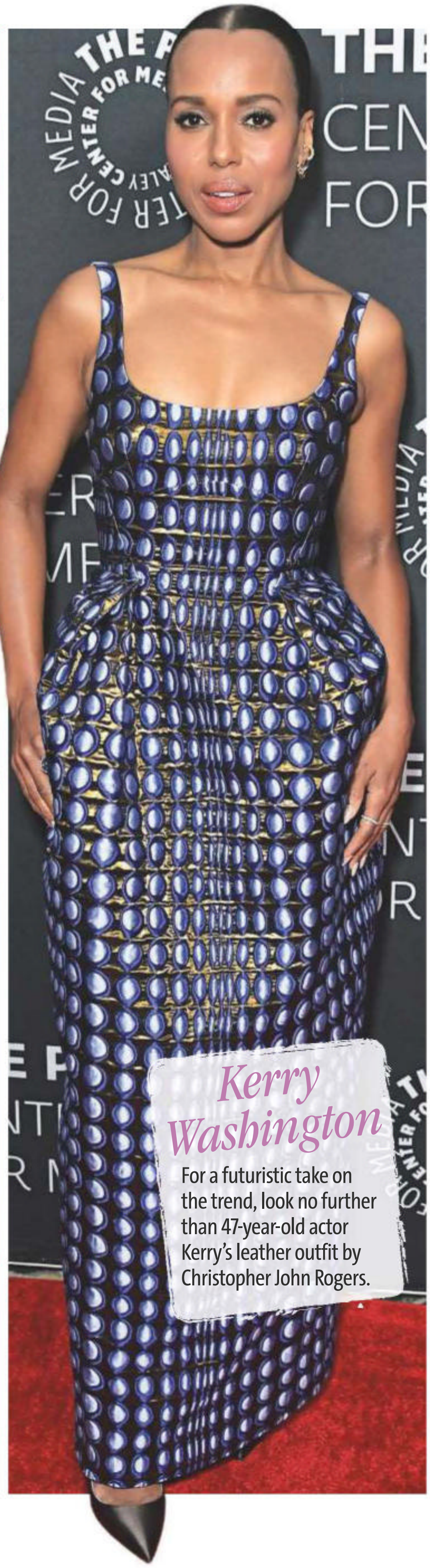
Helen Mirren

The 79-year-old star proves that you can look pretty in pastels at any age, as she dazzled in an embellished gown.



Lara Stone

Lara, 41, let her ruffled Christopher Kane frock do the talking by pairing it with nothing other than a pair of simple court shoes.



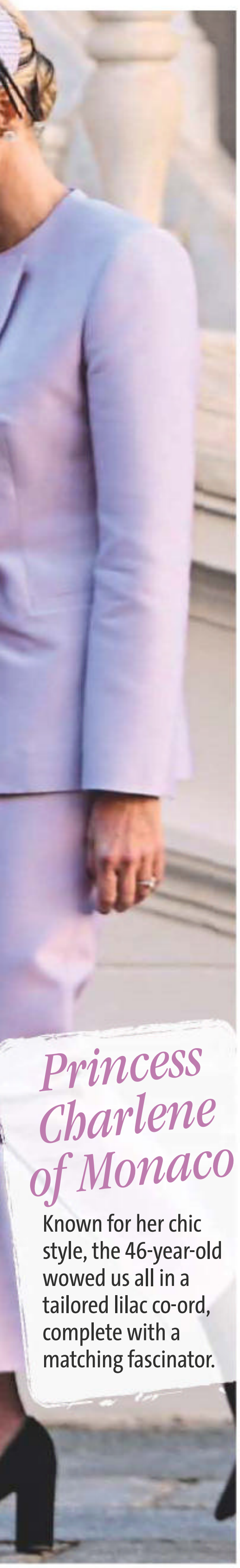
Kerry Washington

For a futuristic take on the trend, look no further than 47-year-old actor Kerry's leather outfit by Christopher John Rogers.

Words: Cigdem Tanrioglu, Pictures Getty Images and Imago

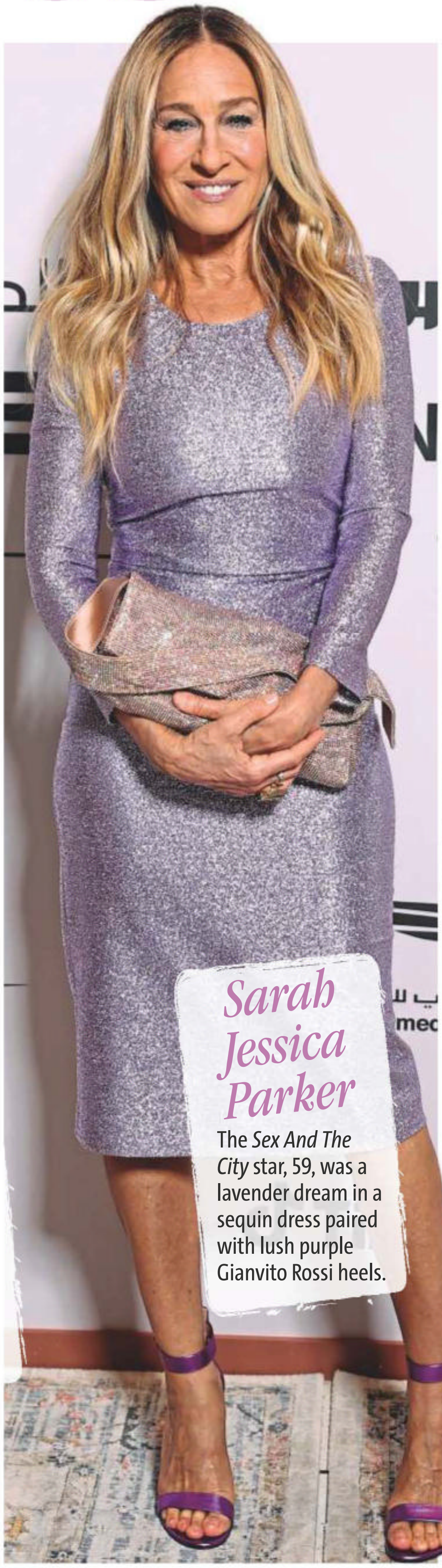
dies

Celebs are embracing the new year in this sorbet shade



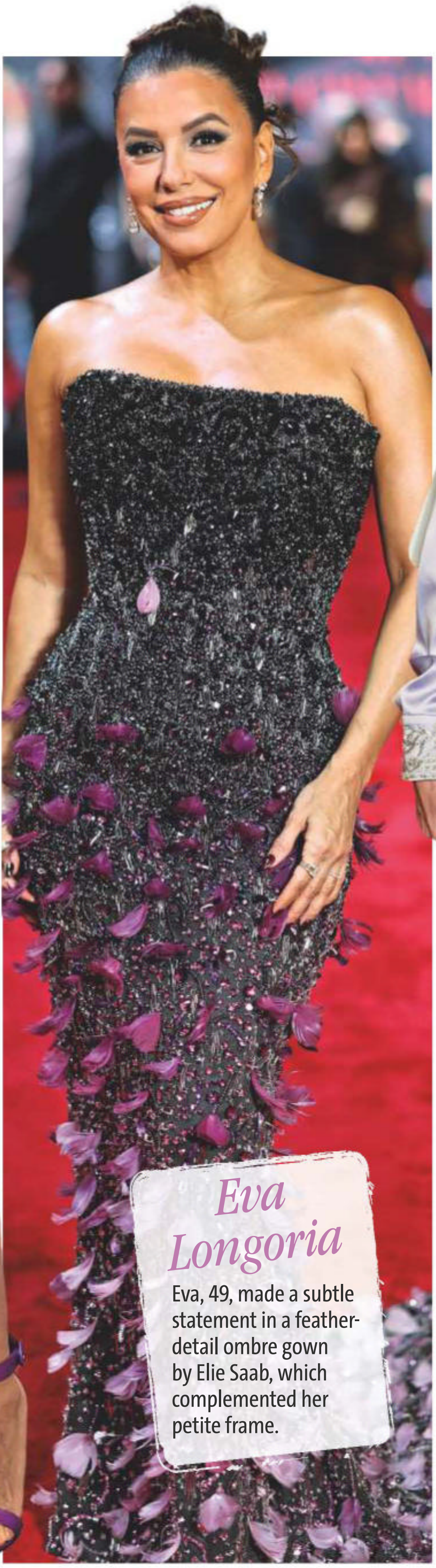
Princess Charlene of Monaco

Known for her chic style, the 46-year-old wowed us all in a tailored lilac co-ord, complete with a matching fascinator.



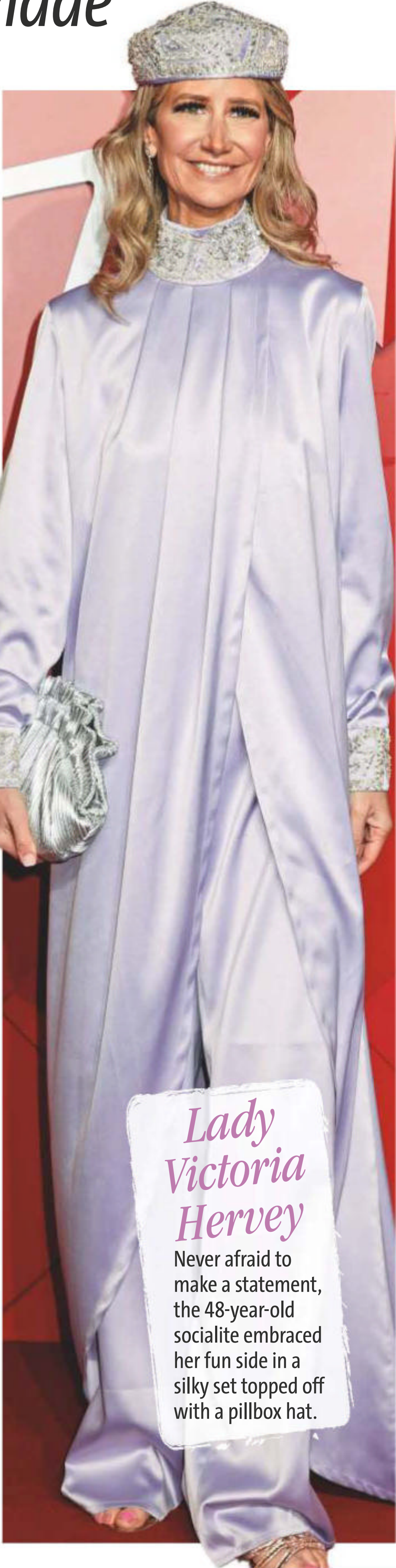
Sarah Jessica Parker

The *Sex And The City* star, 59, was a lavender dream in a sequin dress paired with lush purple Gianvito Rossi heels.



Eva Longoria

Eva, 49, made a subtle statement in a feather-detail ombre gown by Elie Saab, which complemented her petite frame.



Lady Victoria Hervey

Never afraid to make a statement, the 48-year-old socialite embraced her fun side in a silky set topped off with a pillbox hat.

Panic over Tess and Claudia's future on show

Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman have signed a new contract to front *Strictly Come Dancing* for the next two years, according to reports. BBC bosses reportedly offered the pair – who have co-hosted the competition for over a decade – an 'enhanced' package in a bid to keep them on board amid worries they'd had enough following the 2024 scandals that rocked the talent contest. 'This isn't just a sign of the faith that the BBC has in the presenting duo, it also signals the commitment the corporation has to the show itself. Bosses want to focus on the positives – which includes having two women fronting the biggest show on TV,' a source said.

Meghan's new setback

Fresh blow as duchess's Netflix show is delayed

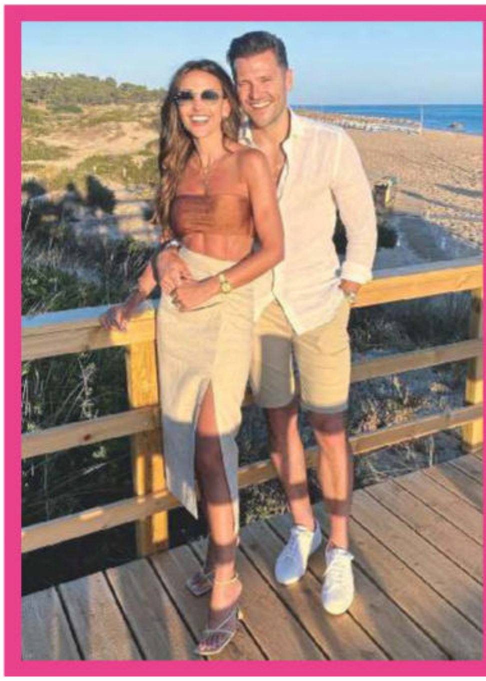
Meghan Markle has postponed the launch of her new show *With Love, Meghan*, in the wake of the devastating California wildfires. The Duchess of Sussex's 'inspiring' lifestyle series, which has been described as a 'love letter' to southern California, was due to air on Netflix on 15 January but has now been pushed back to 4 March.

'I'm thankful to my partners at Netflix for supporting me in delaying the launch, as we focus on the needs of those impacted by the wildfires in my home state of California,' Meghan said. She and Prince Harry have been helping out in a personal capacity during the aftermath of the fires. They were seen at an evacuation centre in Pasadena, Los Angeles, chatting to victims and volunteers. An estimated 10,000 buildings have been destroyed, leaving thousands homeless as the death toll continues to rise. At the time of going to press, the couple's home in Montecito was described as being on the edge of the 'extreme danger zone'.

But *Family Ties* and *Desperate Housewives* actor Justine Bateman wrote online that the pair were nothing more than 'disaster tourists'. She said, 'Meghan and Harry are no better than ambulance chasers. What a repulsive 'photo op' they achieved. They are 'touring the damage'? Are they politicians now? They don't live here; they are tourists. Disaster Tourists.'

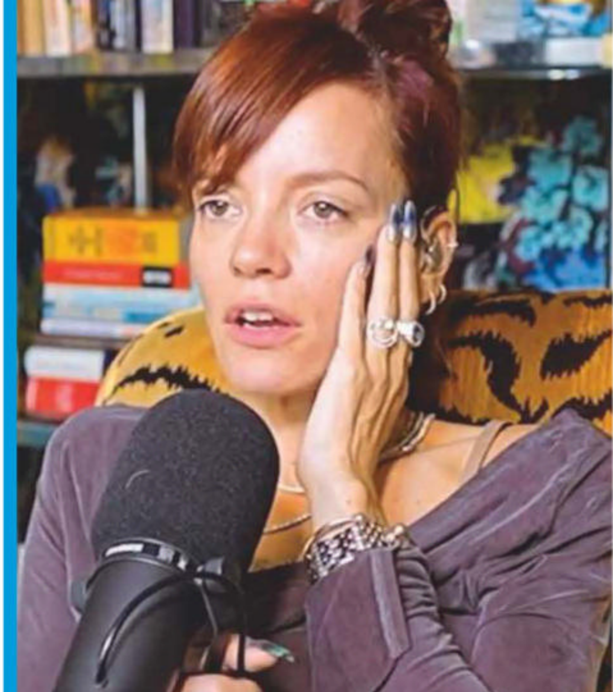
Meghan, 43, said she will share ideas on baking, gardening and more as she invites old and new friends to join her 'in the kitchen, garden and beyond' in her show.

'Whether Meghan is sharing personal tips and tricks, or taking the opportunity to learn something new, it's a time for connection,' Netflix said. 'For Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, love is in the details: the small, personal moments that bring delight to those we cherish.'



MARK & MICHELLE: BABY ON THE BOX?

Michelle Keegan and Mark Wright have been approached to star in their own reality-TV show as they prepare for first-time parenthood. 'Michelle and Mark are such a TV power couple, and becoming parents is huge for them. A couple of production companies are writing up propositions to see if they'd let in cameras to follow them becoming parents,' an insider said, adding that it's in 'planning stages'. 'There is a huge audience that would love an insight into Michelle and Mark's world.' Michelle and Mark, both 37, revealed last month they are expecting a baby, as they prepare to celebrate their 10th wedding anniversary in May.



Lily's time out

Lily Allen has checked into a trauma treatment centre, after admitting she has been struggling following her marriage breakdown. The singer, 39, decided to spend time at an £8k-a-week centre after she revealed on her podcast *Miss Me* that she has 'been spiralling and spiralling' following her split with husband, actor David Harbour, last month. 'Lily felt wobbly and desperate to escape,' an insider said. Reports claim that Lily – who is mum to Marnie, 13, and Ethel, 11, from her previous marriage – will spend several weeks at the US residential retreat. The couple called it quits in December after Lily claimed she caught the *Stranger Things* star on a dating app.

TWINS FOR JESY

Jesy Nelson has revealed her double baby joy. The former Little Mix singer, 33, announced she is expecting twins with musician Zion Foster as she shared a photo of him cradling her baby bump on Instagram. 'Eating for 3 now,' she said. Her ex Chris Hughes and celeb pals Amanda Holden and Alan Carr were among those who sent their well-wishes on social media. 'Go on girl,' said ex-Love Islander Chris, while Alan wrote, 'Wonderful news!' Jesy and Zion, 26, were reported to have broken up last September but have clearly rekindled their romance.

By Shereen Low. **Pictures** Shutterstock, Instagram, Netflix, PA, BBC

WEEK IN PICS

Bride to be!

Rita Simons is getting married! The soap star announced she's engaged to fiancé Ben Harlow as she posted a pic showing off her ring. 'So this happened!' she said. Her former *EastEnders* co-star Jessie Wallace commented, 'Can I be bridesmaid?' to which Rita, 47, replied, 'Course you bloody can!'

Sparkling on ice

Holly Willoughby dazzled as she made her TV return on *Dancing On Ice*. The 43-year-old star wore a blue floor-length Suzanne Neville gown as the new series debuted earlier this month. 'Thanks to my wonderful glam team for making me feel like a princess,' she said.

The new Pammy?

Davina McCall was all smiles as she dressed up in a *Baywatch*-inspired outfit backstage for *The Masked Singer*. The 57-year-old, who recently had surgery for a benign tumour, larked about as her beau Michael Douglas styled her hair. Meanwhile, *My Mum, Your Dad*, which she hosted, has been cancelled due to a reported lack of eligible men.

Kate chan

As the Princess
remission, she

A fter an ‘incredibly turbulent’ year away from full-time royal duties due to her cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment, Kate Middleton is making her comeback. Last week, she made her first public engagement of 2025, returning to the Royal Marsden Hospital to thank the staff who treated her in person. During her visit, the Princess of Wales also spoke to other patients and offered them her support.

Afterwards, in an Instagram post, she revealed the positive news that she was in remission. Calling it a ‘relief’, she said she remained ‘focused on recovery’. ‘I am however looking forward to a fulfilling year ahead. There is much to look forward to,’ she added.

But Kate has a big new decision – just how much work to take on. With some reports claiming that Kate intends to fulfil more royal duties in 2025, and William saying that he hopes she can join him on foreign trips, others revealed that she intends on making a ‘gradual return’ to her role as she continues to be mindful of her health.

Kate’s 2025 programme, which is being organised by Kensington Palace, is said to ‘balance work, being a mum and supporting her wider family’. This approach shows how torn Kate is between her royal commitments and her responsibilities as a mother to Prince George, 11, Princess Charlotte, nine, and Prince Louis, six.

‘The children always come first,’ *Bella*’s source says. ‘Kate will focus on projects she’s deeply passionate about, like her Early Years initiative.’ Another insider said that while Kate’s Early Years work remains her ‘number one’ priority, she plans to also attend key royal events such as Trooping the Colour – while still caring for her young family. She has been doing the school drop-off, attending sports fixtures and taking the children to play dates and tennis lessons.

The source said also that the princess – who celebrated her 43rd birthday with her family on 9 January – ‘simply won’t be going back to work in the same way as before’ her diagnosis, with a ‘slow return’ to full-time public duties and no plans for any full-scale foreign tours.

‘There is no huge reset button that’s going to be hit in January. What we will actually see is a slow continuation of the princess balancing her recovery and her public-facing duties,’ they said. ‘It’s impossible to go through that kind of trauma and not to be changed as a person. It’s about pace. Cancer impacts on your perspective, and what you have seen in the decisions they’ve made over the last year is that family and the children continue to be at the centre of their universe.’

That said, with both the King

Kate’s priority is her Early Years work

Exclusive

in turmoil: 'She's ged as a person'

of Wales reveals she's in still has a big decision ahead

and Queen close to 80 and with their own health concerns, Prince William and Princess Kate are expected to take the reins over the coming months and years. It's been said that they are preparing for a monarchy that looks set to redefine the future of the British royal family.

'The Wales family's modern monarchy is very much about quality over quantity,' our insider said. 'Both William and Kate want to focus on causes close to their hearts, which can help people.'

> 'They're focused on family'

After revealing last September that she had completed her chemotherapy treatment in a moving video, Kate made a number of public appearances. She joined William to pay respects to the Southport victims in October. The following month, she attended the Remembrance Day service at the Cenotaph in London. December saw the princess taking part in the Qatari royal visit, hosting her annual Together at Christmas carol concert at Westminster Abbey – where she was joined by husband Prince William and their children – and joining the royal family at Sandringham for their traditional Christmas Day church service. All this signalled her quiet but impactful return to public life following an 'incredibly tough year', in her own words.

Kate's battle with cancer was revealed in a deeply personal video message in March last year, where she described her diagnosis – which came after she underwent abdominal surgery last January – as a 'huge shock'. The revelation sparked a nationwide outpouring of sympathy and admiration for Kate, further solidifying her status as the modern 'People's Princess'.

With the children

'There's very much a feeling behind Palace walls that Kate has what has been dubbed the "Diana-effect",' our source said. 'Kate's courage during a difficult year helped bring her closer to the public. An image of a deeply loved princess who has been accepted by the people and who can help pull the monarchy through difficult times is what has taken shape over the past year. This image is dynamite for the Firm, which has been struggling in recent years following "Megxit" and two Prince Andrew scandals.'

Despite the pressures of royal life and recent health challenges, William and Kate remain a united team. 'There's still so much love between them,' the source shared. 'They're very much focused on family and helping the British people. They haven't forgotten their duty.'

Visiting patients at Royal Marsden last week

She's become a joint royal patron of the hospital with William

By Shereen Low. Pictures Alamy, PA Images / Alamy Stock Photo, Shutterstock

Linda urged fans to 'not be frightened'

She regularly appeared alongside sister Coleen on *Loose Women*

Linda Nolan: 1959-2

'I've always living life to

On *Celebrity Big Brother* in 2014

The Nolans had huge success

Legendary singer

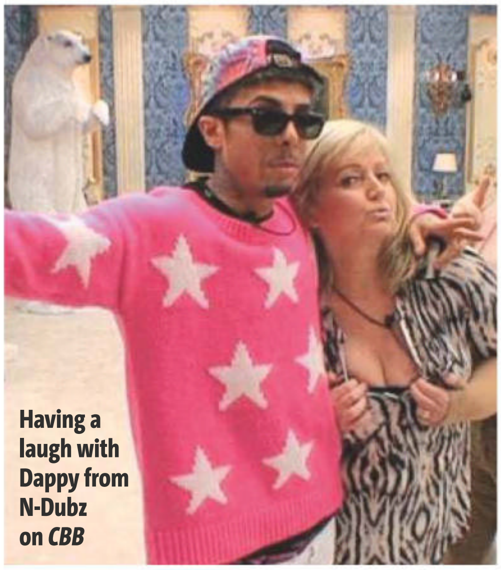
After battling cancer for nearly 20 years, Linda Nolan sadly passed away at the age of 65 last week.

The singer, a member of pop group The Nolans, died with her family around her at Blackpool Victoria Hospital on 15 January.

Her agent Dermot McNamara said, 'She passed peacefully, with her loving siblings by her bedside, ensuring she was embraced with love and comfort during the final moments. Linda's legacy extends beyond her incredible achievements in music and entertainment.' Her sister Coleen added she was 'utterly devastated' by Linda's passing, saying, 'Linda was a beacon of love, kindness and strength. Her memory will live on in the many lives she touched. Rest in peace, Linda. You will

With her husband Brian

In recent years she became an advocate for the cancer community



Having a laugh with Dappy from N-Dubz on *CBB*

025

believed in the fullest'

and actress passes away aged 65

forever be in our hearts.'

Linda was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005 – she subsequently had a mastectomy and was given the all-clear in 2011. But in 2017, tumours were found in her hip bone and pelvis, leading to another diagnosis of incurable secondary breast cancer. In 2020, it spread to her liver and, in 2023, to her brain.

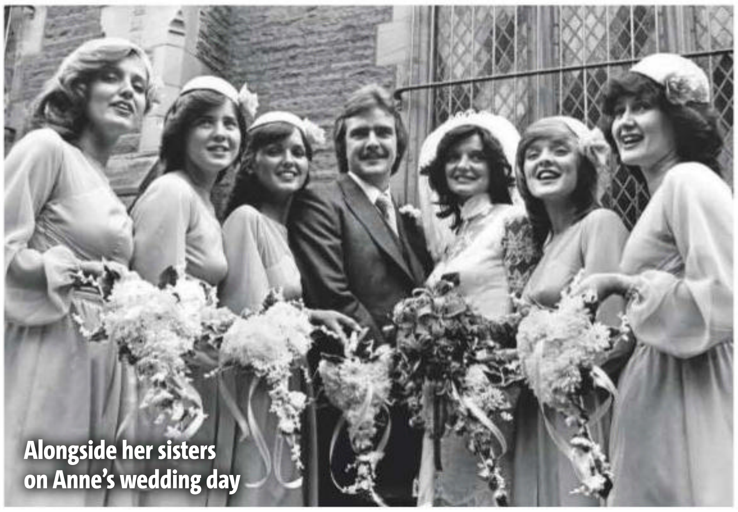
Last summer, Linda spoke about how she learnt to deal with her diagnosis and had remained positive. 'It was a shock, but I was determined to fight,' she said, adding, 'The return of the cancer was a harder blow, knowing it was incurable. But I've always believed in living life to the fullest and that's what I continue to do. Every day is a gift.'

She also urged anyone who had suspicious lumps to get them checked. 'Don't ignore any signs or symptoms and make sure to get regular check-ups,' she told fans, adding, 'Also, remember you're not alone. There's a community out there ready to support you. Stay hopeful and cherish every moment. Please don't be frightened.'

Linda initially found fame alongside sisters Bernie (who died from cancer in 2013), Maureen, Coleen, Denise and Anne in The Nolans, but went on to star in TV programmes such as *Celebrity Big Brother* and in the West End show *Blood Brothers*. In 1981, she married partner Brian Hudson. He sadly died of cancer in 2007. She also wrote a best-selling memoir, and raised over £20m for charity. Our thoughts go out to her friends and family. Rest in peace, Linda.

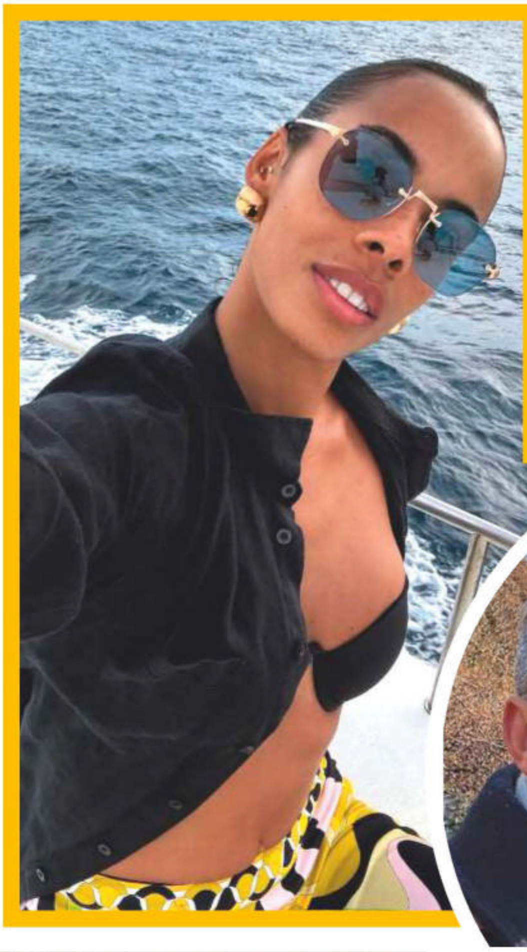
breast cancer now

With sister Maureen



Alongside her sisters on Anne's wedding day

By Stephen Leng. **Pictures** Alamy, Shutterstock



Rochelle Humes

Who wants a conventional new year? Rochelle, 35, and Marvin Humes, 39, celebrated 2025's arrival in paradise in the Maldives with their three kids and, somewhat unexpectedly, Jessie J.

Claire Sweeney

Fresh off the back of her split from Ricky Hatton, Claire, 53, rang in the new year with her son Jaxon, 10, and friends in Barbados. There are definitely worse ways to get over a break-up...

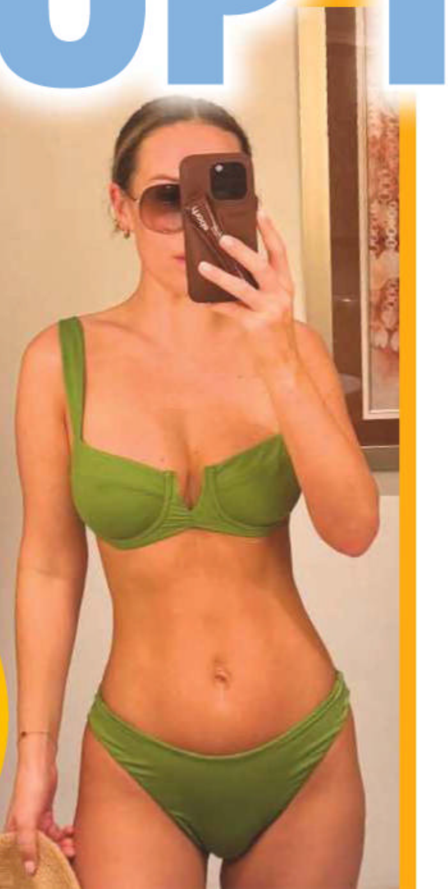
SOAKI UP TH

Ben Shephard

It might not be the Bahamas, but Ben, 50, found appreciation for British beaches on a recent trip to the Devon coast with his wife Annie and her family. 'Feel refreshed and ready to hit 2025,' he wrote.

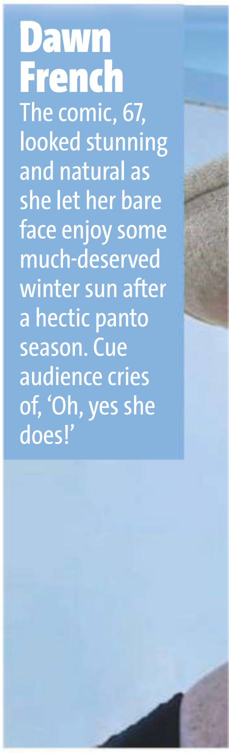
Eva Longoria

The *Desperate Housewives* actor, 49, said she was 'out of office' as she showed off her bikini bod in enviable holiday snaps on Instagram. Eva, who is just weeks away from her 50th birthday in March, looked decades younger. Stunning.



Kate Ferdinand

Kate, 33, showed off her enviable bikini body – and dishy husband Rio, 46 – while on holiday in Dubai. The couple celebrated eight years since they first met on the trip, with Kate writing that she was 'grateful and excited' for 2025.



Dawn French

The comic, 67, looked stunning and natural as she let her bare face enjoy some much-deserved winter sun after a hectic panto season. Cue audience cries of, 'Oh, yes she does!'

By Isobel Lewis. **Pictures** Instagram

ING
E SUN

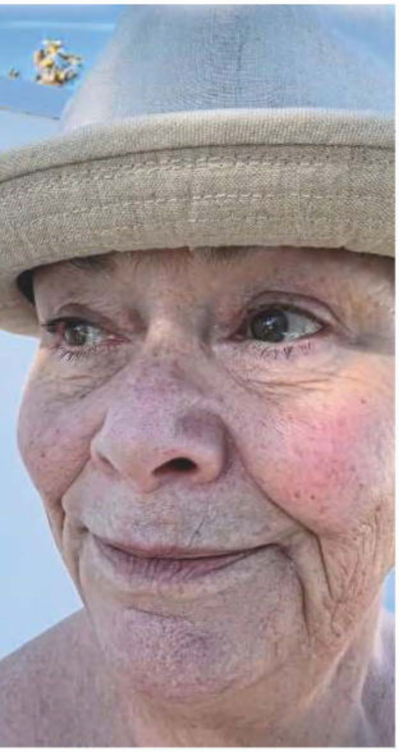
These celebs are enjoying some winter holidays

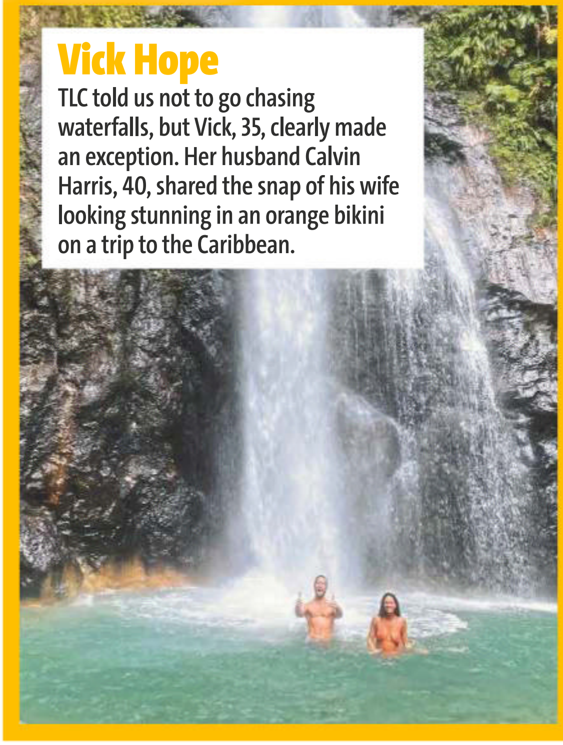
Priyanka Chopra

What a life! Priyanka Chopra, 42, escaped to the picturesque turquoise waters of Turks and Caicos with husband Nick Jonas, 32, for a beach getaway with their daughter Malti, who turns three this month.

Coleen Rooney

She spent the run-up to Christmas Down Under; although *I'm A Celeb* runner-up Coleen's Aussie holiday was more bugs than beaches. Luckily, the WAG, 38, was joined by her family after the show ended, where the mum of four actually got the relaxing break she deserved.





Vick Hope

TLC told us not to go chasing waterfalls, but Vick, 35, clearly made an exception. Her husband Calvin Harris, 40, shared the snap of his wife looking stunning in an orange bikini on a trip to the Caribbean.

Katie Piper

TV personality Katie, 41, seemed fully settled into beach life as she holidayed it up in front of some swoon-worthy sunsets with husband Richard Sutton and their kids on a recent trip abroad.

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Gabby Logan

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bella debate

Move over pocket money, some parents are setting up a wage for their children in return for doing jobs around the house.

So we ask…

Should you pay your kids a salary?

No

‘This just sends the wrong message’

Hannah Doyle, 40, author

Look up the dictionary definition of salary and you’ll see it’s a regular payment in return for work. Do my twins work? Not unless you class jumping off the sofa and bickering over whose turn it is to choose what’s on the TV as their job.

As a self-employed writer with kids to ferry around and a husband who works shifts, I have to be flexible and I’ll often write through weekends to get the job done.

When my boys were born, the ‘sleep when your baby sleeps’ narrative felt totally alien to me. My first book was written to the soundtrack of snoozing babies in the background!

I adore my job, and my kids of course, who are now seven. But do I really need to put them on a salary for doing things I think should come as standard?

There is no way I’m rewarding them for cleaning their teeth or making their bed with a weekly fiver. Whatever next? A premium bond every time they don’t spill Cheerios down their school uniform?

It’s sending the wrong message. Cash doesn’t come easily and it’s vital to teach children the value of money from a young age. If my children want something outside of the realm of things I buy them anyway, they know they need to go above and beyond their day-to-day activities to give their piggy banks a boost. As for a regular salary, that will wait until they’re old enough to actually have a proper job.

Yes

‘It teaches them the value of money’

Emma Bradley, 49, parenting blogger and teacher

In our home, pocket money is treated like a salary, not a gift. It’s an agreed-upon amount given in exchange for contributing to our household tasks. Just as I reward them for good exam results, I also reward them for helping out with the housework. I believe this approach motivates them and encourages a good work ethic, after all, we are all motivated by extrinsic rewards.

It helps them understand that earning money is both enjoyable and hard work. It teaches them that time and effort have value – money isn’t just handed out, it’s earned.

Our household is busy, and in the past, I’ve paid a cleaner for similar jobs, so why wouldn’t I pay my kids? It’s a fair transaction that shows I value their time. But I don’t withhold money as punishment; their earnings reflect the work they’ve done, not their behaviour.

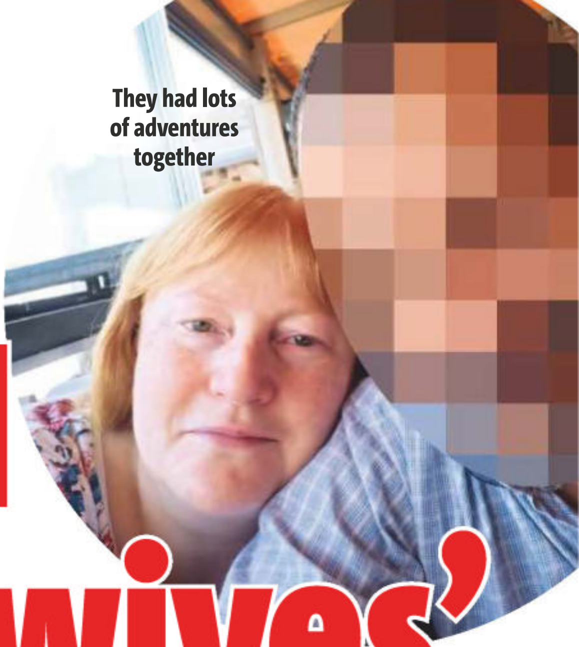
I see it as a way of preparing them for having their own homes and the tasks that need to be done.

Paying children a salary teaches them responsibility, work ethic, and the value of money, all while fostering a fair and respectful family environment.

SHARE YOUR VIEW …with Bella online at **bellamagazine.co.uk** or on **facebook.com/bellamagazineUK**

By Paula Costas **Pictures:** Shutterstock

'My cheating husband had THREE other wives'



They had lots of adventures together

When Carol El Hawary, 59, fell for the man of her dreams on holiday, she left everything behind to start a new life with him. But all wasn't as it seemed…

Watching the tour guide walk into our hotel, I blushed. He had a sexy smile and captivating dark eyes. 'He's gorgeous,' I thought. He introduced himself as Ahmed and, after talking us through our arrangements for a boat trip the following day, we exchanged numbers.

I felt excited about the prospect of seeing him again, however, there was one catch – I was already married.

'He made me feel alive'

It was October 2014, and my husband Gary and I had tied the knot 24 years before. He was the nicest man I'd ever met as well as safe, dependable and loyal. We settled down in a terraced house near Manchester and, as the years went by, we had a solid life with steady jobs, a mortgage and our beloved dog, Bracken. But over time, Gary started to feel like more of a best friend than a lover.

Carol and her sister on holiday

When I was 49, I craved an adventure, so booked a holiday to Egypt with my sister, Dawn, and my niece, Kirsty. It wasn't Gary's kind of thing, so he stayed at home. On our first day, we explored the pyramids and rode camels. It was exactly what I'd been craving, but now, as I messaged Ahmed before our tour, I realised texting him was the biggest thrill I'd experienced in a long time.

The following day, we watched sea turtles through the glass bottom of a submarine and went quad-biking through the desert. I confessed to Dawn that I liked Ahmed and she was surprised we'd formed a connection in such a short amount of time. Her shock didn't stop me from arranging to meet Ahmed, and we shared a kiss. Although I felt bad for cheating on Gary, Ahmed and I really had a connection, and he felt the same. What was happening between us was so exciting – he made me feel alive.

'I was one of four!'

Ahmed explained that he was legally married to the mother of his four children but claimed they weren't romantic and didn't live together. He said they were only still married on paper due to the stigma of divorce in Egypt, but he was technically single. I really wished I was too…

Back home, I tried to go back to my sensible life, but it was no good. I couldn't shake the feeling that my relationship with Ahmed was more than just a holiday romance. I told Gary about my adventures but left out anything about my holiday fling. Gary was still the same sweet man I'd always known, and I was flooded with guilt. But still, I couldn't get Ahmed off my mind. When he invited me back to Egypt, I agreed, telling Gary I was going on another tour. This time, Ahmed and I fell in love. Ahmed said he wanted us to be together, and I wanted that too. I just had to go home and tell Gary.

In January 2015, I finally plucked up the courage to end my marriage, hand in my notice at my job as a bank manager and leave behind the only life I knew. My colleagues were gobsmacked and my friends weren't impressed either, claiming he only wanted my money, but they hadn't seen me with Ahmed.

When my divorce came through that August, I took Bracken to live with my parents, packed two suitcases and flew out to Cairo. Within two days, Ahmed had proposed and, as men in

Ahmed and Carol on their wedding day

She now lives back in the UK

Egypt are legally allowed to have up to four wives, Ahmed's existing wife wasn't an impediment. Weeks later, we went to the courtroom and married. It was a world away from my first wedding, but I'd found the right man. We set up a tour company together and were happy spending our time travelling Egypt.

But then, in January 2018, I received a text from a friend. She said she'd just met Ahmed with another woman, who he introduced as his wife. It turned out that far from being wife number two, I was actually number three… Heartbroken, I confronted Ahmed and chucked him out. It turned out he'd married the woman years before he'd even met me. Ahmed did everything he could to get me back, agreeing to go to couples therapy and to cut ties with the woman. I'd given up everything to be with Ahmed, and I didn't want to throw that away, so slowly we reunited and rebuilt our wonderful life.

In 2020, Ahmed's second wife passed away. He still saw his first wife intermittently because of their children, but as far as I was concerned, it was just the two of us. But then, Ahmed began disappearing for a few hours at a time saying he had a few family problems and wouldn't open up when I pressed him on it. Soon, he was away for days at a time, and when I came home after a quick trip to the UK, he still wasn't there. When an entire month had passed with no sign of my husband, I received a voice note from a number I didn't know.

I listened in shock as a woman's voice said, 'I want to know who you are.' She explained that she was married to Ahmed, who had told her we were getting divorced, but she'd seen our messages and was suspicious. My heart shattered. I'd left my whole life behind to be with this man and had gone from being wife number two, to number three, and now I was one of four! This time Ahmed showed no remorse and made no promise to change.

The other wives had predated me, but he'd been with this woman for a year. While I thought we were happy, he'd found and married another woman. The betrayal was overwhelming, and I knew I could never forgive him.

After nine years, I packed up my life in Egypt and came back to live in Manchester in May 2024. I'm now looking at getting legally divorced, though I'll have to travel back to Egypt to do so.

In the meantime, I'm in a new relationship with a man I met online. Despite what he's put me through, I still love Ahmed, but I don't believe he could ever have been faithful. His other surviving wives have left him, and I know he's remorseful about what he put me through.

People told me it would all end in tears, and it did. But I don't regret moving to Egypt, following my heart and marrying Ahmed. I just regret not leaving after finding out the man he truly was the first time.

I went looking for adventure and love, but instead I found heartache and betrayal.

By Kate Graham, Sharon Wright and Miyo Padi

‘I lost 6st so I coul SEE MY GRANDKI GROW UP’

After being diagnosed as prediabetic, Sheila Hogan, 60, has seen her health transformed

BEFORE
17st
Size 22

She was worried about her health

Growing up, I was known as the ‘chubby’ child. My dad was slim, but I took after my mum’s side, where everyone carried extra weight. But as a teenager, I managed to slim down by staying active and playing netball. I met my partner, Phil, when I was 15, and he was 17. Six years later, we got married and in 1992, I became pregnant with our daughter, Georgia. I weighed around 11st, but by the end of the pregnancy, I’d gained about six stone.

Afterwards, losing that weight was a struggle, and I fell into a pattern of yo-yo dieting.

In 1995, we moved from Bradford to Edinburgh, and for a while, walking to work helped me shed some pounds. But the weight always seemed to creep back. My forties were particularly challenging. My mum was diagnosed with terminal cancer, and caring for her was heartbreaking. The stress saw me drop back to 11st, but after Mum passed away, I turned to food for comfort, and my weight shot up to nearly 17st. Over the next 30 years, I became trapped in a cycle of losing weight and then putting it on again.

I would never blame Phil, now 63, for my struggles, but it didn’t help that he was a trained chef! Our dinners were often indulgent – steak and potatoes or creamy chicken dishes, followed by sticky toffee pudding. I’d always have huge portions with a glass or two of red wine.

Carbs were my downfall. After eating sugar, pasta, or potatoes, I’d feel exhausted and need a nap. I called it my ‘carb coma’. I also struggled with painful digestion.

By August 2023, I was back to just under 17st. One day, rushing between meetings, I tripped on a cobblestone and injured my left knee. An X-ray revealed arthritis, but worse was to come.

‘Your blood tests that show you’re pre-diabetic,’ the doctor told me. ‘And your cholesterol is very high.’ I was terrified. Both my grandmother and aunt had type-2 diabetes, and I knew I was headed the same way if I didn’t change. I wanted to be around for my grandsons for as long as possible, and with my 60th birthday approaching, I knew I had to act. I started researching online and considered weight-loss surgery. It felt like the only option I had left.

Then I came across an interview in a magazine with Oprah Winfrey. She looked fantastic and was talking about how weight-loss injections had helped break her own cycle of yo-yo dieting. I looked into it and discovered that the active ingredient in these

Before her weight loss

Sheila as Shirley Bassey and Phil as Elvis on her 60th

AFTER
11st
Size 12

Sheila's now more active and feels fab

injections – semaglutide – has been used to treat type-2 diabetes for years because it reduces blood sugar. More recently, it had been approved as a weight-loss medication as it also curbs appetite and reduces cravings for sugary and starchy foods.

Like with any medication, there were potential side effects, but to me, the benefits far outweighed the risks. I found a weight-loss programme called Second Nature, which is backed by the NHS, and I felt confident in their approach. I took an online test to see if I qualified, and once I was approved, I got started.

Within three days, I noticed a massive difference. 'I just don't feel hungry,' I told Phil one evening. Before, I'd always be peering into the fridge, wondering, 'What can I eat now?' But suddenly, that voice in my head had gone quiet.

I did experience some side effects of the medication. For the first few days, I had some mild nausea. A few weeks later, I noticed more frequent migraines, and by the second month, I saw some hair thinning. However, I put that down to the rapid weight loss rather than the medication itself.

DIET BEFORE

BREAKFAST Bacon roll and a biscuit
LUNCH Baked potato with tuna and cheese or sandwich, crisps, chocolate bar or biscuit
DINNER Chicken in a cream sauce with potatoes or lasagne with garlic bread
SNACKS Crisps, biscuits

DIET AFTER

BREAKFAST Weetabix with Greek yogurt and fruit or sourdough toast with avocado and an egg
LUNCH Cooked slices of ham or beef with pickled onion
DINNER Grilled chicken or salmon with lots of green veg
SNACKS None

I became more mindful of my portions and what I was eating and, by January 2024, I'd lost over three stone and had gone down from a size 22 to a size 16. I felt incredible. For my 60th birthday, I threw a fancy-dress party and dressed as Shirley Bassey in a red sequined gown with a cape.

I joined a gym and started strength training too. By August last year, I'd reached a size 12 and I've now shed of a total of six stone. Now, I'm just 7lb away from my target weight. I'm still taking the medication weekly at the maximum dose but once I hit my goal, I plan to reduce it.

I'm nervous that if I stop the injections altogether I'll regain the weight, so I'm now working with Second Nature to find a balanced long-term solution for me, which may or may not include medication.

> 'I have energy to enjoy life'

Since starting the injections, my eating habits have completely transformed. I do intermittent fasting and usually don't eat until around 12pm. My first meal of the day is something like sourdough toast with scrambled eggs and spinach or Weetabix with fruit and yogurt. I still eat Phil's lovely meals, but smaller portions, and I skip the starchy carbs. If we have curry or chilli, I'll have broccoli instead of rice. I still drink red wine, but I can't tolerate the volume of alcohol that I used too.

I now sleep better, my energy levels have soared, and my digestive issues have nearly vanished. My doctor recently confirmed that I'm no longer pre-diabetic, and my cholesterol is back to normal. Although I still have arthritis in my knee, the pain is much more manageable with the weight loss.

For me, the cost of the medication has been worth every penny. It's cheaper and safer than weight-loss surgery, which can cost upwards of £10,000 in the UK. Now, I have the energy to enjoy life to the fullest, and most importantly, I'm a healthy, active nana. Knowing I'll be around to watch my grandsons grow up makes me so happy.

● *Visit secondnature.io*

By Elaine Hayward and Carol Driver

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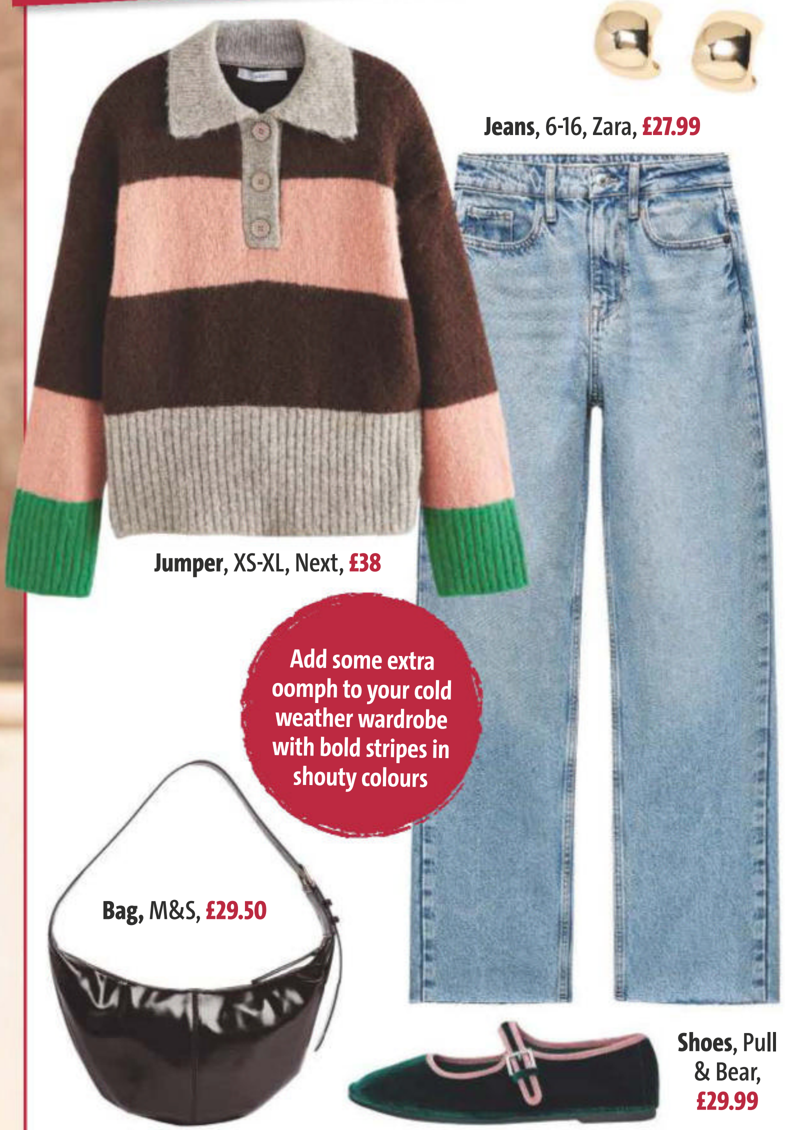
WINTER WARMERS

Look chic and feel cosy with these fab buys

Statement Sweater



Earrings, Oliver Bonas, **£18**

Jeans, 6-16, Zara, **£27.99**

Jumper, XS-XL, Next, **£38**

Add some extra oomph to your cold weather wardrobe with bold stripes in shouty colours

Bag, M&S, **£29.50**

Shoes, Pull & Bear, **£29.99**

Wear a matching knitted set together for a high-fashion feel or mix with other separates

Snuggly Set

Jumper, XS-XL, **£55**, **Skirt**, **£59**, XS-XL, both Sosandar

Continued over the page...

Classic Coat

Coat, XS-XL, Primark, £40

Scarf, Pull & Bear, £17.99

Jumper, XXS-XXL, H&M, £12.99

Skirt, 6-24, M&S, £35

Boots, Peacocks, £35

A longer length cover-up in a soft powder grey is a total classic and will sit well over just about everything in your wardrobe

Best Vest

Dress, XS-XXL, H&M, £32.99

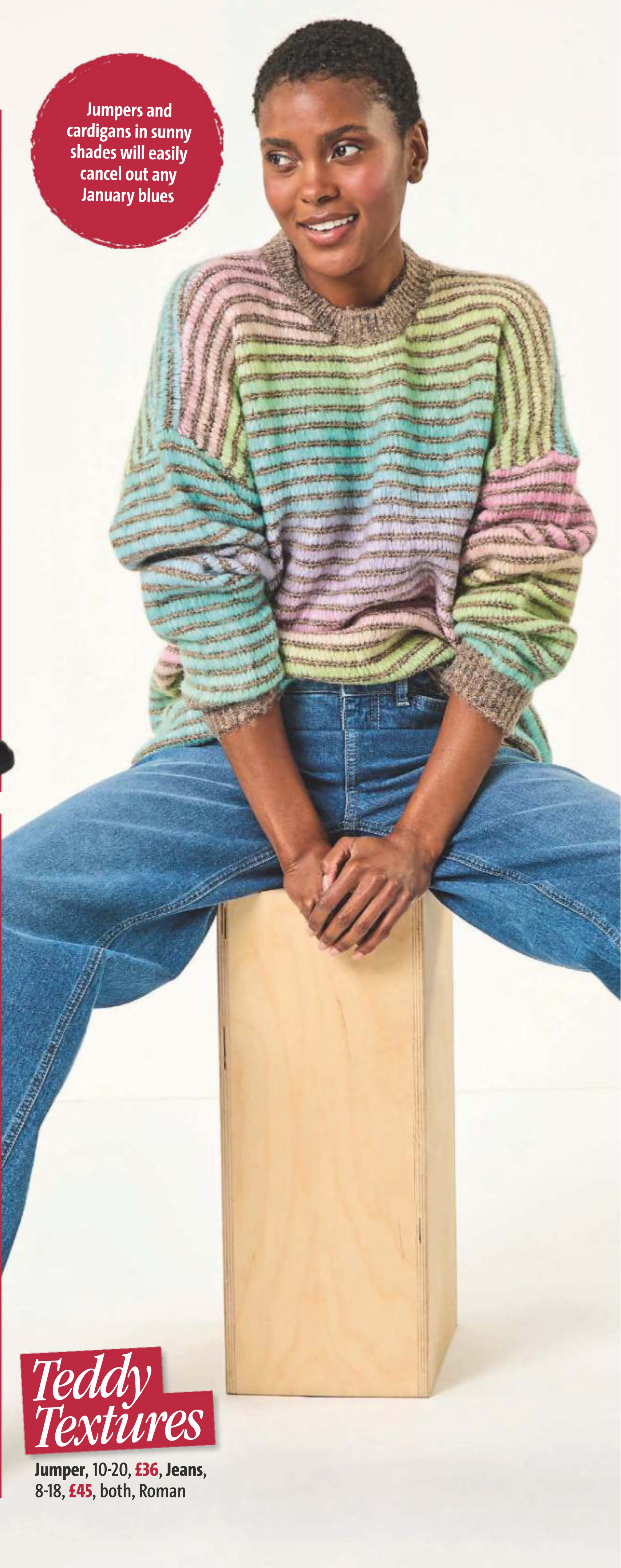
Vest, XS-XXL, Next, £35

Earrings, Betty & Biddy, £18

A woolly sleeveless vest can be layered over your favourite summer dresses to give them a warmer spin

Bag, Pull & Bear, £25.99

Boots, H&M, £37.99



Jumpers and cardigans in sunny shades will easily cancel out any January blues

Teddy Textures

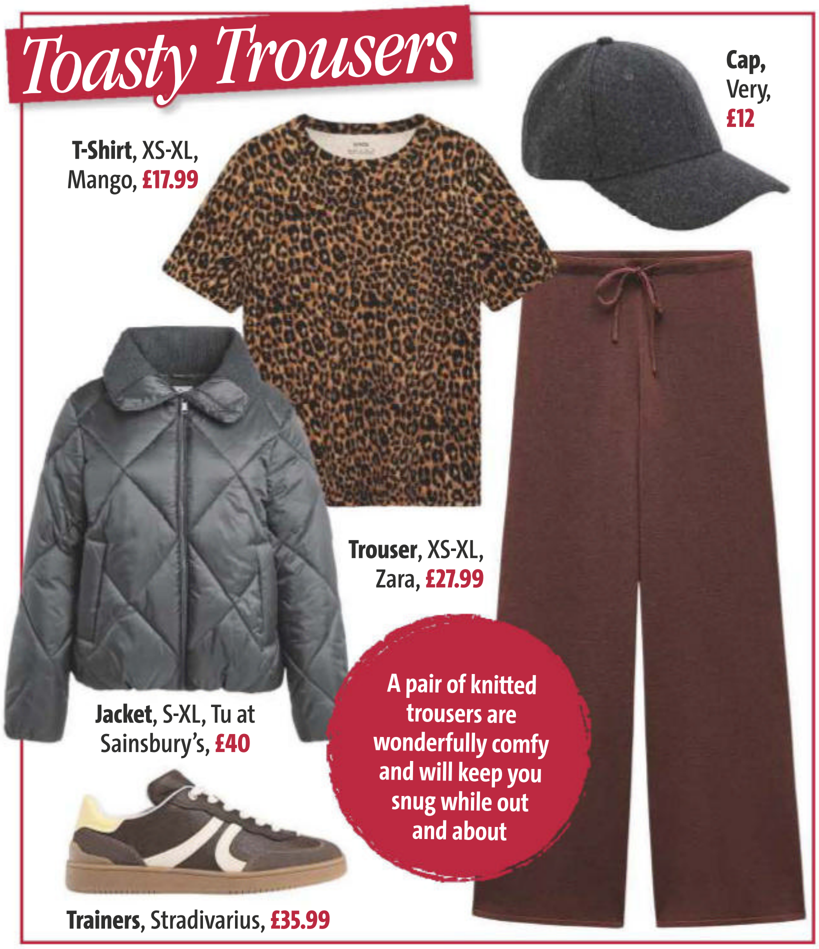
Jumper, 10-20, £36, **Jeans**, 8-18, £45, both, Roman

A mid-length jumper dress will keep you warm in style. Finish with trainers or boots for a daytime wow factor

Do-It-All Dress

Dress, XS-XL, **£42**,
Boots, **£85**, Next

Toasty Trousers



Cap,
Very,
£12

T-Shirt, XS-XL,
Mango, **£17.99**

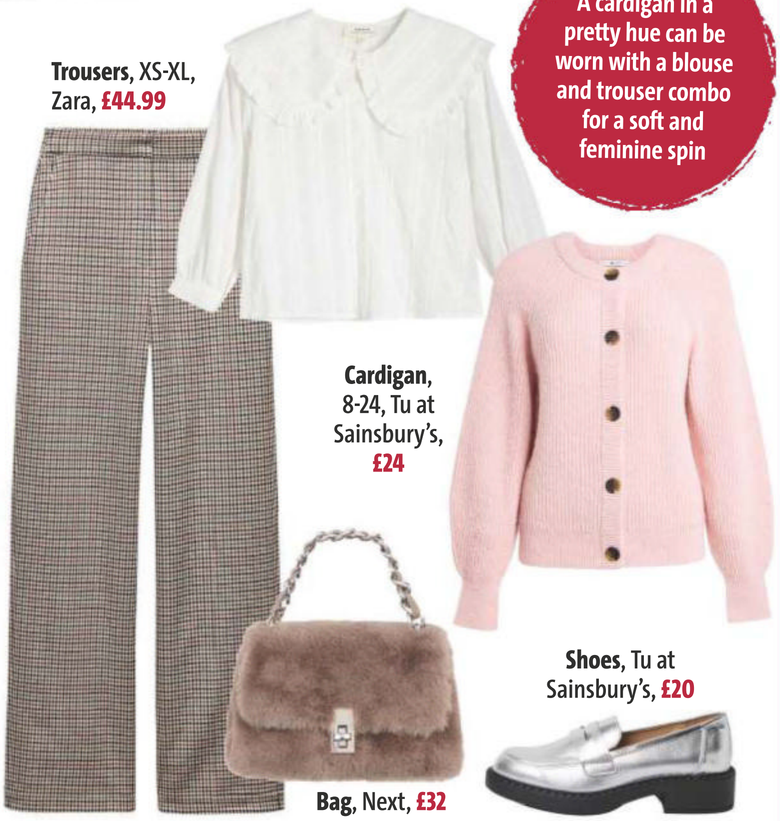
Trouser, XS-XL,
Zara, **£27.99**

Jacket, S-XL, Tu at
Sainsbury's, **£40**

A pair of knitted trousers are wonderfully comfy and will keep you snug while out and about

Trainers, Stradivarius, **£35.99**

Cute Cardie



Blouse, S-XL,
Reserved, **£19.99**

A cardigan in a pretty hue can be worn with a blouse and trouser combo for a soft and feminine spin

Trousers, XS-XL,
Zara, **£44.99**

Cardigan,
8-24, Tu at
Sainsbury's,
£24

Shoes, Tu at
Sainsbury's, **£20**

Bag, Next, **£32**

Compiled by: Matilda Stanley

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Stradivarius, £22.99

Marks & Spencer, £39.50

Primark, £14

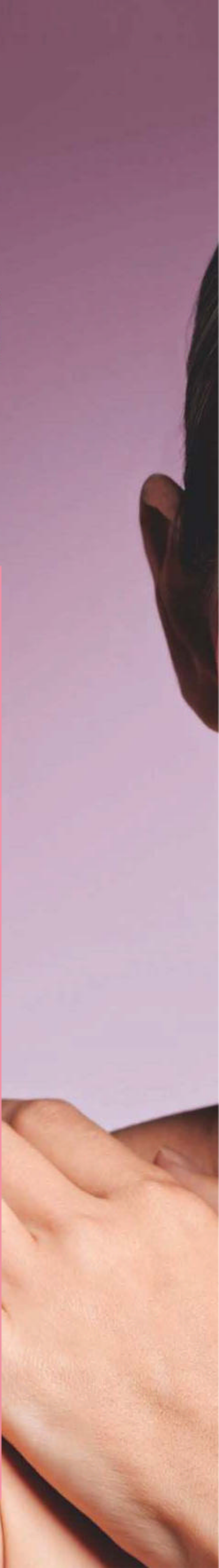
Pull & Bear, £25.99

Stradivarius, £22.99

By Phoebe Denman. **Pictures** Getty

Bright Eyed

Rejuvenate your peepers with our guide to awakened under-eyes



Clever Creams

The skin around your eye area is much thinner and more delicate than the rest of your complexion. Therefore, it is important to treat it accordingly with an eye cream. Choosing the right formula depends on the results you are seeking. To reduce crow's feet, a retinol-powered cream, such as the **Q+A Retinol Eye Cream**, £12, is your best choice. Whereas for dark circles, we recommend opting for a brightening formula like **The INKEY List Brighten-i Eye Cream**, £12. For hydrating and smoothing benefits, we love **Caudalie's Resveratrol Lift Firming Eye Gel Cream**, £39, which leaves under-eyes looking noticeably less puffy.

Q+A
RETINOL
Eye Cream
CAUDALIE
Resveratrol-Lift
BRIGHTEN-i™ EYE CREAM
THE INKEY LIST

Pampering Patches

For some extra TLC, incorporate patches into your routine. Like a face mask for your under-eyes, they are designed to deliver a dose of active ingredients and provide a quick pick-me-up. **PIXI's FortifEYE Eye Patches**, **£22 for 30 pairs**, use botanical collagen and peptides to lift and firm, while **BeautyPro Retinol Under Eye Patch**, **£6 for three pairs**, feature retinol to help improve pigmentation, fine lines and uneven texture. For a cooling treat, choose **NIP+FAB Hyaluronic Fix Extreme4 Hydration Jelly Eye Patches**, **£19.95**, which are packed with moisture-boosting ingredients.

Beauty PRO
RETINOL
under eye patch

PIXI
FortifEYE

NIP+FAB
HYALURONIC FIX
EXTREME4 JELLY EYE PATCHES

Colour Correctors

BEAUTY PIE
e.l.f.
PUTTY COLOR-CORRECTING EYE BRIGHTENER

If you're struggling with dark circles or pigmentation, applying a colour corrector before your foundation and concealer is an amazing way to brighten your under-eyes. The **Charlotte Tilbury Magic Vanish**, £27, neutralises, smooths and lifts the look of your skin for a flawless finish. If you're looking for a budget option, the **E.l.f. Putty Colour-Correcting Eye Brightener**, £6, features illuminating pearls for a radiance-boosting effect. Last but not least, bag the **Beauty Pie Superluminous Under-eye Genius, £20 or £12 for members**, which not only brightens but also nourishes the delicate skin barrier and smooths the look of fine lines.

Full-Coverage Concealers

A lack of sleep can wreak havoc on the eye area, but luckily there are a host of under-eye concealers that are specifically formulated to disguise fatigue. **Trinny London BFF Eye Serum Conceale**, £28, combines non-creasing coverage with powerful skincare benefits thanks to hydrating hyaluronic acid and illuminating vitamin C. If you're looking for a buildable concealer with a luminous finish, **MAC Studio Radiance 24HR Luminous Lift Concealer**, £25, offers up to 24 hours of radiant wear. For less than a tenner, **Maybelline's Instant Anti Age Eraser Concealer**, £9.99, banishes dark circles while minimising the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

MAYBELLINE NEW YORK
ERASER
MULTI-USE CONCEALER
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MAC
STUDIO RADIANCE
TRINNY LONDON
BFF SERUM EYE CONCEALER

By Emma White. **Picture:** Getty

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WANT TO SHARE YOUR SUMMER TRANSFORMATION TALE?

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Gemma's life was affected by her weight problems, and she panicked when her husband booked their first holiday with their son. She feared not fitting into an airplane seat. This kickstarted her weight-loss journey and, determined to slim down for the trip, she lost 7st.

Gemma used The Story People to share her summer transformation story, and you can too.

The Story People

Fill in the 5-minute form on our website to find out what you could earn today or email us at mystory@bauermedia.co.uk

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Vegan Treats

Update your beauty routine for Veganuary with these plant-based products

This reparative moisturiser left our skin feeling hydrated and smooth. Formulated with oatmeal and nourishing shea butter, it's cruelty-free and, of course, 100% vegan. **First Aid Beauty Ultra Repair Cream,** £31.95

For shine and nourishment, look no further than these blueberry hair gummies. Packed with reishi, chaga, and snow mushroom, they help strengthen your strands. **Imarais Beauty Nourish Vegan Haircare Gummies,** £40 **for pack of 60**

Treat skin to a multi-tasking cleanser that hydrates while fighting acne. The charcoal in the formula clears excess oil, while the grapeseed oil strengthens the skin barrier. **Eco Warrior Charcoal Clear Skin Bar,** £3.79

We love this argan oil-infused mascara that nourishes lashes while delivering a full flutter. Plus, it contains plant-based fibres to help add length. **Barry M It's a Wrap Tubing Mascara,** £8.99

This gentle body wash combines vitamins C, E, and F with inulin and lactic acid to soften skin. The soothing gel lathers into a foam, cleansing without irritating sensitive areas. **Luna Daily The Everywhere Wash,** £14

More than your basic blush, this is a creamy, cloud-like formula that comes with skincare benefits. Dab it on for a glowy pop of colour, that won't look cakey or overdone. **Nudestix Stax All Over Colour Blush Balm in Melon Sugar,** £22.50

Smell super fresh with a zesty-scented deodorant that soothes sensitive skin with macadamia oil to soften and prickly pear to calm irritation. **UpCircle Refillable Deodorant with Macadamia and Bergamot,** £19.99

Palette London have created a holy grail product with these nail-strengthening paints, which are as effective as they are affordable. **Palette London Nail Paint in Papaya Passion,** £8

By Phoebe Denman

Lose 5lb in 7 days

Your tastiest diet ever

We've teamed up with Jane Michell from Jane Plan, a UK pre-prepared healthy meal delivery company to give you a flavour-packed plan. It's portion and calorie-controlled, with a balance of healthy carbohydrates, lean protein and healthy fats, to leave you feeling satisfied, lighter, leaner and full of energy. Jane says, 'Give yourself a kick start this new year with my seven-day plan and lose up to five pounds. Packed full of deliciously healthy recipes, you'll enjoy super tasty meals as well as losing weight and feeling fabulous.'

Jane Michell

HOW IT WORKS

- Eat around 850 calories a day for the first week, with a breakfast, lunch and dinner every day. Have a snack if you feel peckish, like a piece of fruit or some veggie crudites. If you've more weight to lose, this one-week plan can be a great kickstart. After the week increase your calories to around 1,200 a day by adding mixed nuts, seeds and a cup of quinoa or brown rice.
- Avoid salt, sugar, and alcohol as these can lead to water retention.
- Be kind to your gut by avoiding caffeine, but if you need a caffeine hit, try green tea instead.
- Start your day with a mint tea to reduce hunger and end it with a warm camomile tea to aid digestion and improve sleep. Enjoy 2 litres of water a day.
- Nourish your body with plenty of salads, green vegetables, and berries. They're high in fibre and water and tend to be low in calories and sugar.
- Add spices and herbs. Chilli can work as a natural appetite suppressant, and mint aids digestion and prevents bloating.
- Do some gentle stretching every day, and if possible, try yoga or meditation to relax your body and your mind.

YOUR ONE-WEEK PLAN

All meals and snacks given are for one person, unless otherwise specified.

Day 1

Breakfast

Berry muesli

Low sugar muesli with 100ml skimmed milk and two handfuls of mixed berries.

Lunch

Chicken broth

Makes 4 servings

Heat 1tbsp olive oil in a large saucepan, add 1 large onion, 2 large carrots, 2 sticks of celery and 1 leek, all finely chopped. Season and fry for 5min, stirring frequently. Rinse 50g pearl barley in a sieve under cold running water and add to the pan. Pour in 1.5l hot chicken stock, cover with a lid, bring to the boil and then simmer gently for 45min or until the pearl barley is tender. Remove the stems from 75g cavolo nero or savoy cabbage, thinly slice and add to the pan with 200g cooked and shredded chicken breasts. Simmer for 5min. Check the seasoning and then divide between bowls and serve.

Dinner

Winter ratatouille

Heat 1tbsp olive oil in a deep-frying pan over a medium heat. Add 1 red onion, chopped and stir for 3min. Add 1 garlic clove, finely chopped and stir for a further 3min. Stir in 100g each of butternut squash, 1 red and yellow peppers and 100g beef tomatoes, all chopped. Add 1tsp cumin seeds and a sprinkle of dried chilli flakes. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer for 30min. Serve with a dollop of low-fat crème fraiche on top, a dsp toasted pine nuts and a scattering of fresh basil leaves.

Day 2

Breakfast

Egg, asparagus and tomato

A poached egg with 100g steamed asparagus and 1 large grilled tomato.

Lunch

Clementine, fennel and pomegranate salad

Makes 4 servings

Thinly slice a large fennel bulb. Place in the bottom of a shallow serving bowl and scatter over a large handful fresh watercress leaves. Cut the peel and pith off 3 clementines, then place the segments on top of the watercress. Scatter over 2tbsp toasted pumpkin seeds and 3tbsp pomegranate seeds. Make a dressing by whisking together, until smooth, 2tbsp olive oil, 1tbsp pomegranate molasses, ½tsp red wine vinegar and 1tsp grainy mustard, and a pinch of salt and pepper. Drizzle over the salad, toss and serve.

Dinner

Chicken Laksa

Place half a chopped shallot, half a chilli, ½tsp grated ginger, 1 chopped garlic clove, half a chopped lemon grass stalk, ½tbsp vegetable oil, ½tsp curry powder, the zest and juice of 1 lime, and a pinch of salt and black pepper, into a blender and blitz into a paste. Tip into a saucepan and fry for 3min. Add 200ml hot chicken stock, 1 lime leaf, ½tbsp fish sauce, and 1tsp sugar, and bring to a simmer. Add 1 chicken breast and simmer with the lid on for 8-10min, or until the chicken is cooked through. Pass the mixture through a sieve to make the sauce smooth (discard the solids). Cook 50g noodles according to the packet instructions. Add 200ml light coconut milk and a pak choi to the laksa sauce in the pan and simmer for 1min. Add more lime juice as needed. Serve the noodles with the cooked chicken, thinly sliced, on top and the laksa sauce. Scatter with bean sprouts, coriander, mint, extra chilli slices and lime wedges to squeeze over and serve.

Day 3

Breakfast

40g oats with 100ml skimmed milk and 2 handfuls of mixed berries (enjoy cold or cook as porridge).

Lunch

Leftover chicken broth

Dinner

Roast cod Provençal

Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas 7. Place the following on a roasting tray - half a red onion, cut into wedges; a red pepper and courgette, chopped; an unpeeled garlic clove, and a pinch of dried chilli flakes. Top with ½tbsp olive oil and 1tsp balsamic vinegar. Roast for 15min. Remove from the oven, place a 150g cod fillet (skin-side down) on top. Add a tsp of lemon zest over the top, and 2 lemon slices on top of the fish. Add 75g cherry tomatoes on the vine and 10g pitted Kalamata olives. Drizzle over 1tsp olive oil and bake for 10min. Scatter on a handful of fresh basil and serve with 2 handfuls of watercress.

Day 4

Breakfast

Gorgeous granola

40g low sugar granola, with 2 handfuls of raspberries, topped with 180ml skimmed milk.

Lunch

Leftover clementine salad

Dinner

Pan-fried plaice with fresh tomato, lemon, and caper salsa

First make a salsa. Heat ½tbsp olive oil in a medium-sized pan, add half a small red onion, finely chopped, and fry over a medium heat until softened. Add 1 clove garlic, finely chopped. and 1tbsp capers, and fry for another min. Stir in 100g cherry tomatoes, and warm through for 1min. Remove from the heat, stir in a small handful fresh basil, shredded. Set aside. Next lightly coat a skinned plaice with flour. Heat 1tbsp olive oil in a frying pan, add the plaice and fry for 2min on each side. Add 1tbsp olive to the pan, squeeze in the juice of 1 lemon and add the fish back to the pan to baste. Serve the plaice with the salsa, 2 handfuls of steamed green beans and 2 lemon wedges.

Day 5

Breakfast

Crunchy berry oats

Two handfuls of berries topped with 2tbsp low fat yogurt, 1tsp porridge oats and 15g chopped almonds.

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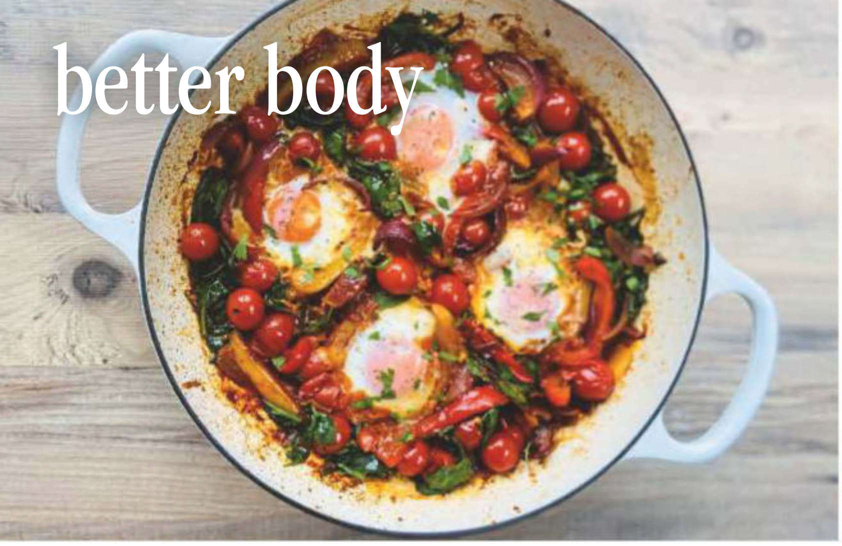

Lunch

Honey roasted beetroot and celeriac

Serves 4

Preheat the oven to 200C/ gas 6. Place half a celeriac, peeled and cut into cubes; 2 large carrots, peeled and cut into chunks; 1 red onion, cut into wedges, onto a large, shallow roasting tray, drizzle with a little olive oil, salt and pepper, a few sprigs of thyme and roast for 20min. Cut 3 medium-sized cooked beetroots into wedges, add these to the half-roasted carrots, drizzle with 1tbsp runny honey, the finely grated zest and juice of half an orange and roast for a further 20min and serve.

Dinner

Shakshuka

Lightly fry, using 1tsp olive oil, a quarter of an onion, sliced; and a quarter red and quarter yellow pepper, chopped. When they soften add 1 garlic clove, chopped; ½tsp cumin; ½tsp ground coriander; and ½tsp paprika or chilli. Tip in half a can of tinned tomatoes, 50g spinach, and 50ml water. Cook for 10min, then make 2 indents in the mixture and gently crack 1 egg into each the indents. Cover and cook until the eggs are set. Uncover and scatter with fresh herbs. Enjoy with two handfuls of green leafy salad on the side.

Day 6

Breakfast

Healthy bubble and squeak

Serves 4

Cook 400g potatoes, then mash. Place 1 leek, thinly sliced and 150g cabbage, thinly sliced, in a non-stick pan with a little spray oil and a splash of water. Season and steam with a lid over a high heat for 5min or until just tender. Tip into a large bowl with the cooked mashed potatoes. Divide the mixture into 8 patties. Heat a non-stick frying pan, add a little spray oil and then fry half the patties for 5min or until golden. Flip them over and fry on the other side for another 3-4min or until golden and crisp. Repeat until all the patties are fried. Serve hot.

Lunch

Tomato and mozzarella salad

Roughly tear half a ball of low-fat mozzarella, add 4 chopped tomatoes, a handful of fresh basil and 1tsp pine nuts. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar.

Dinner

Vegetable chilli

Fry a small chopped with a handful of chopped peppers, carrots, courgettes; a small diced sweet potato; 1 clove of sliced garlic, and 1tsp of chilli powder for 10min, add a little water if sticking. Add a chopped tomato and 50ml vegetable stock. Simmer for 20min, add more water if needed. Add half a tin of chickpeas and simmer for a further 10min. Serve sprinkled with chopped chillies, spring onions and coriander.

By Julia Smurthwaite. **Pictures:** Shutterstock,Getty

Day 7

Breakfast

Egg, asparagus and tomato

Enjoy a poached egg with 100g steamed asparagus and one large grilled tomato.

Lunch

Rainbow winter salad

Chop half an onion and lightly fry it in 1tsp of sesame oil. Finely chop a combined total of 300g of red cabbage, broccoli and carrot and add to the pan and fry for 3min. Stir in ½tsp Dijon mustard, 2tsp balsamic vinegar and mix together. Serve with a small handful of walnuts and fresh parsley.

Dinner

Spicy Mediterranean veg, goat's cheese and giant couscous

Preheat oven to 200C/ gas 6. Cut a courgette, half a red pepper and half a red onion, into chunks, and coat with 1tbsp olive oil and 1tbsp harissa paste. Roast in a shallow roasting tin for 20min. Simmer 75g giant couscous for 6-8min in 100ml chicken stock. Tip into a bowl. After the vegetables have roasted for 20min, add 50g cherry tomatoes and 15g pitted Kalamata olives and roast for another 10min. Add the juice and zest of half a lemon to the couscous. Tip the roasted vegetables on top of the couscous, crumble over 20g goat's cheese and serve with a handful of rocket.

READER OFFER

● Save £30 every month on your order

● If you fancy trying out Jane Plan, then we've got a fabulous £30 off every month for you. Our tester Emily tried Jane's 1200-calorie weight-loss plan and loved it, 'The meals and snacks were so tasty and enjoyable. It was great having all my meals and snacks ready, just to simply add veg and salad. I lost a stone in 28 days, it didn't feel like a diet at all!' For delicious meals and the support, you need to achieve your weight-loss goals the easy way, go to janeplan.com. For your exclusive £30 monthly discount, use code 'BELLA30' at the checkout at janeplan.com or phone on 0800 612 8198. Offer expires 14 April 2025. Offer includes free standard delivery every month.
Only one discount code per order and must be used at the time of ordering.
Win a month's worth of Jane Plan, worth £379 each

● Two lucky winners have the chance to experience a month on Jane Plan, worth £379 each. You'll receive 28 breakfasts, lunches, dinners and snacks and will have access to weekly live events, a private online community, and if you want a consultation with a Jane Plan nutritionist, they're only a phone call away. Enter at bellamagazine.co.uk/competitions by 4 February 2025.

● Please note, this competition is open to residents to the UK aged 18 years or over. The prizes are non-returnable and non-exchangeable. No cash alternative is available.

NB. If you are pregnant, breastfeeding, under 18 or have a medical condition please seek professional advice before changing your diet.

MCT MAGIC

Feel invigorated with this **MCT Oil**, **£23**, from Davinia Taylor's brand, WillPowders (willpowders.com). Medium-chain triglycerides, derived from coconut or palm oil, are converted into energy, supporting ketosis, boosting focus and enhancing mental clarity. Add 1–2 tablespoons daily to salads or smoothies.

WILLPOWDERS

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Start your day with the energising **AM & PM Mushroom Cold Pressed Shots**, M&S, **£3**, packed with apple, ginger, lime, Lion's Mane, matcha, and ginseng. End it with a calming and soothing PM shot, blending cherry, coconut, Reishi, chamomile, and lavender. A tasty, natural way to boost your mornings and relax at night!

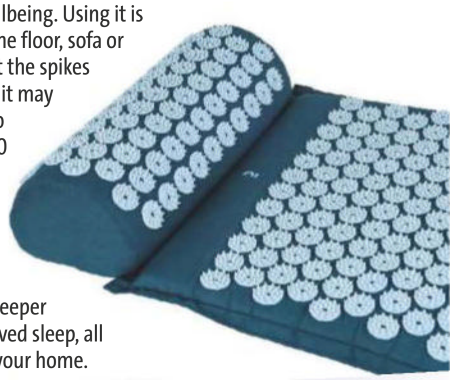
BREW-TIFUL BENEFITS

Freja Instant Bone Broth, Ocado, **£4.76**, is a quick and easy way to enjoy the benefits of this traditional liquid that has gained new recognition as a health food of late. Made with slow-simmered, high-quality ingredients, it's packed with collagen, amino acids and nutrients that support gut health and joint function. Just mix the powder with hot water for a warm, flavourful broth.

freja
BONE
BROTH
Instant Chicken Bone Broth

PINPOINT RELIEF

This **Acupressure Mat**, from Decathlon, **£29.99**, is inspired by ancient practices and the principles of Chinese medicine. Acupressure stimulates energy points across the body, helping to relieve pain, reduce tension and boost overall wellbeing. Using it is simple – place it on the floor, sofa or bed, lie down, and let the spikes do their thing. While it may take a few sessions to adapt (start with 5–10 minutes and wear a shirt initially), the benefits are incredible. With 20 minutes a day, you can enjoy less pain, deeper relaxation and improved sleep, all from the comfort of your home.



THE FIT LIST

Everything you need to feel good and energised

By Helena Holdsworth **Pictures:** Shutterstock

READY, SET, RESISTANCE!

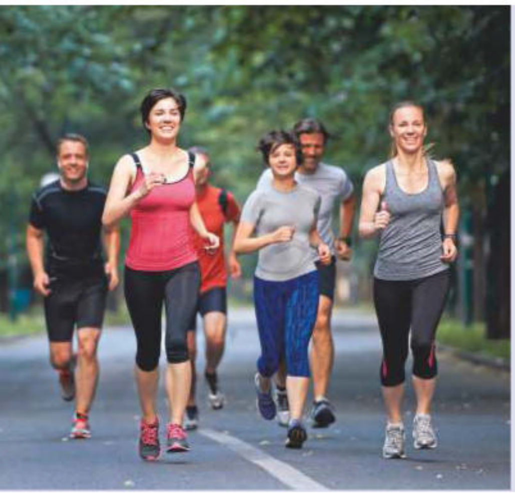
Træningselastik
Exercise tube
Med justerbar modstand. Fra 7-34 kg
With adjustable resistance. From 7-34 kg

Supercharge your strength training with this versatile **Exercise Tube** from Flying Tiger, **£8**. With three adjustable resistance levels, it's ideal for home workouts, toning arms, legs and core. Its multi-setting design lets you easily switch resistance levels for a full-body workout, all with one compact piece of equipment.

SOOTHE THE STRAIN

WELEDA
Arnica Muscle Soak

Transform your bath into a haven of relaxation with this **Weleda Muscle Soak**, lookfantastic.com, **£16.25**. Featuring the pain-relieving magic of Arnica, calming Lavender and the invigorating duo of Birch and Rosemary, it's designed to soothe tired, achy limbs.



SOCIAL WORKOUTS

Run clubs truly took off in 2024, with Brits embracing the social and mental health benefits of running together. These clubs provide a fantastic opportunity to connect with fellow runners, improve fitness and enjoy the camaraderie of group runs – all at no cost. With more runners signing up and races like the London Marathon breaking records, we expect run clubs to keep growing in 2025. Visit runtogether.co.uk to find a free and friendly group near you.

STRICTLY STYLE

Oti Mabuse's debut collection, blends her *Strictly Come Dancing* glamour with everyday functionality. These chic workout sets and luxe loungewear designs come in a range of styles from neutrals to leopard-print. Designed for movement and confidence, the versatile pieces can be mixed and matched for the gym, chilling, or dancing through life. **Gilet**, **£20**, **Leggings**, **£16**, **Top**, **£16**, exclusively at tu.co.uk, argos.co.uk, and selected Sainsbury's stores.

Big veg energy

Make plant-based food more exciting with these nourishing, vibrant meals packed with goodness!

Crushed spiced squash with hazelnut gremolata

Serves 2 as a main, 4 as a side
Takes 45min

- **1 small butternut squash (about 750g), peeled and halved and seeds removed**
- **1tsp fennel seeds**
- **1tsp coriander seeds**
- **1tsp cumin seeds**
- **½tsp ground ginger**
- **½tsp smoked paprika**
- **3tbsp olive oil**
- **Salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- **400g can chickpeas, drained**
- **200g giant couscous (or use brown rice or another whole grain)**
- **100g plain vegan yogurt (or soy or oat)**
- **¼tbsp chilli flakes (optional)**

FOR THE HAZELNUT GREMOLATA

- **30g hazelnuts**
- **Zest and juice of 1 lemon**
- **1 big garlic clove, minced**
- **40g flat-leaf parsley, chopped**
- **75ml olive oil**

1 *Preheat the oven to 220°C/fan 200°C fan. Cut the squash into 2cm cubes and spread over a large roasting tray.*
2 *Combine the fennel, coriander and cumin seeds in a mortar with the ginger and paprika, and grind into a rough crumb. Sprinkle over the squash, then add 2tbsp of the olive oil. Season well with salt and pepper and toss to combine.*
3 *Roast for 15min, then add the chickpeas to the roasting tray, along with the remaining tablespoon of olive oil. Mix well and roast for another 15min until the squash is soft and starting to char in places.*
4 *Meanwhile, cook your couscous in a saucepan of boiling water for 8min. Drain and rinse quickly to prevent it from sticking.*
5 *To make the gremolata, lightly toast the hazelnuts in a dry frying pan. Add the lemon juice, garlic, parsley, hazelnuts and 30ml of the olive oil to a small food processor and blitz until a chunky paste. Pour into a bowl and add the remaining olive oil. Season, to taste.*
6 *Once the squash is cooked, use a fork or a potato masher to mash about half to three-quarters of the squash and chickpeas in the tray you cooked them in.*
7 *Pour the couscous into a large bowl or platter and mix through the crushed squash mixture. Add the gremolata and a few dollops of yogurt. Finish with the lemon zest and a sprinkle of chilli flakes, and a final drizzle of olive oil, if you like.*

Whipped pea, artichoke & za'atar with new potatoes

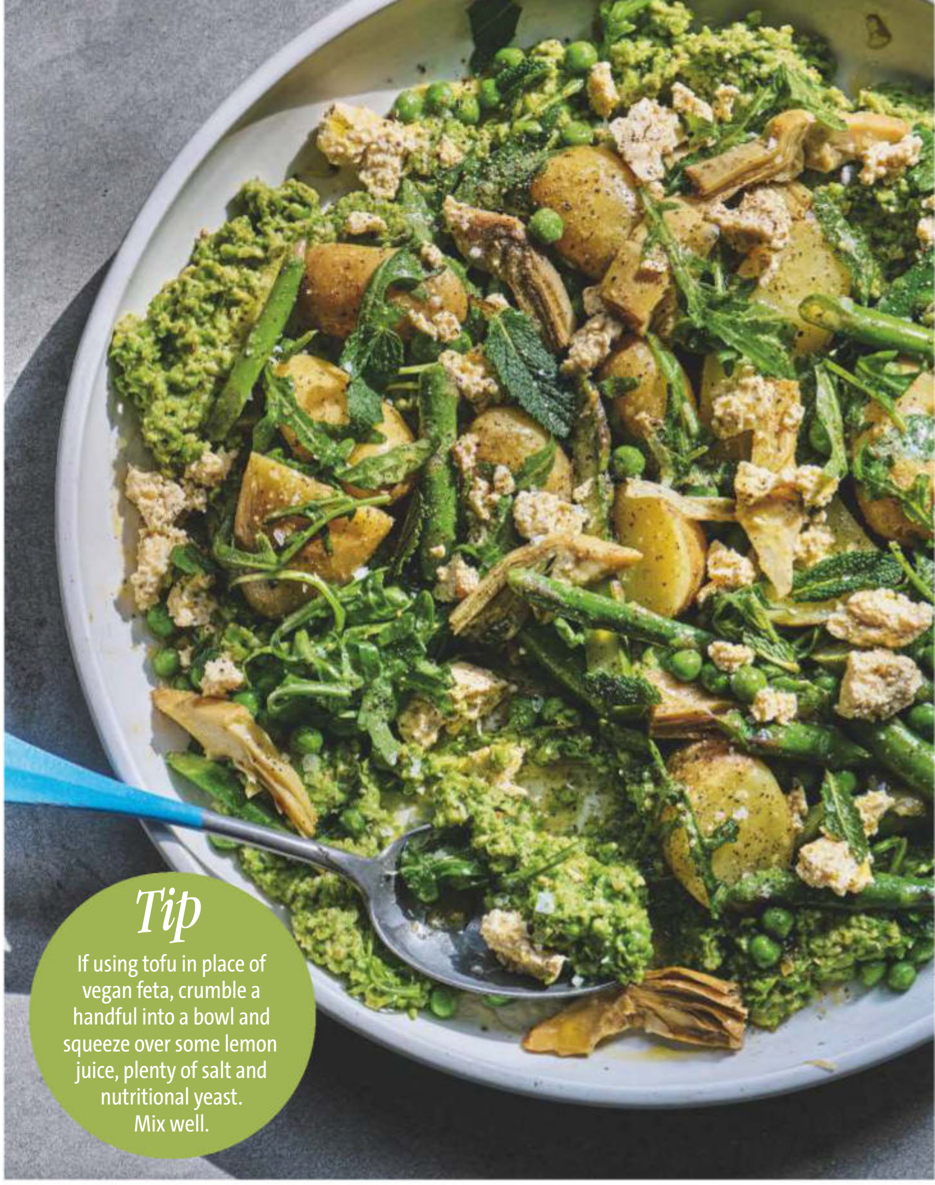
Serves 2-4 *Takes* 30min

- **Salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- **700g new potatoes**
- **150g asparagus spears**
- **100g jarred marinated artichokes, thinly sliced**
- **35g rocket**
- **100g frozen peas, defrosted**
- **1tsp Dijon mustard**
- **Juice of ½ lemon**
- **1tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling**
- **2tbsp za'atar**
- **2tbsp toasted sesame seeds (optional)**
- **8-12 mint leaves**
- **100g vegan feta (gluten-free and nut-free, if needed) or tofu (see Tip)**

FOR THE WHIPPED PEA & ARTICHOKE PURÉE

- **300g frozen peas, defrosted**
- **100g jarred marinated artichokes, plus 2-3tbsp of their oil**
- **3tbsp lemon juice**
- **1tsp Dijon mustard**

1 *Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add the potatoes and boil for around 15min, or until just cooked through. While the potatoes are cooking, add the asparagus spears to the pan for 2min, then remove them with tongs and place in a colander. Rinse under cold running water, then set aside.*
2 *Drain the potatoes and set aside in a colander to steam dry.*
3 *To make the whipped pea and artichoke purée, blend all the ingredients in a small food processor (for a chunky texture) or a blender (for a smooth texture). Season to taste.*
4 *Cut the potatoes into bite-sized pieces. Cut the asparagus spears into 3cm pieces. Combine the potatoes, asparagus, artichokes, rocket and peas in a large bowl. Add the Dijon mustard, lemon juice and olive oil. Toss to combine, and season well to taste.*
5 *To assemble, spoon plenty of the whipped pea mixture on to a plate. Top with the potatoes and vegetables, then drizzle with a little more olive oil, and sprinkle over the za'atar and sesame seeds, if using. Tear over the mint leaves and crumble on the vegan feta or tofu, then serve.*



Tip

If using tofu in place of vegan feta, crumble a handful into a bowl and squeeze over some lemon juice, plenty of salt and nutritional yeast. Mix well.

These recipes are taken from ***Big Veg Energy*** by Christina Soteriou (Ebury Press, £26)

No bake fudgy chocolate log

Serves 6-8 *Takes* 10min, *plus setting*

- **200g vegan dark chocolate (at least 70% cocoa), broken up**
- **170g tahini**
- **2tbsp maple syrup (agave or golden syrup works too)**
- **20g walnuts, roughly chopped, plus extra to serve**
- **4 digestive biscuits (or 60g any other vegan biscuit), broken up into small pieces, plus extra to serve**
- **⅓tsp flaky sea salt**
- **2tsp vanilla extract (optional)**
- **Zest of 1 orange, to garnish**

1 *Line a medium-sized glass container or dish (or a baking tray) with cling film or baking paper.*
2 *Prepare a bain-marie by placing a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering water. Make sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Add the chocolate to the bowl and stir until melted. Or melt in a heatproof bowl in the microwave, heating it in 30sec bursts and stirring between each one.*
3 *Transfer the melted chocolate into a large bowl, then add the tahini and maple syrup and stir well to combine. Add the nuts, biscuits and salt, along with the vanilla extract, if using, and mix well until thoroughly combined.*
4 *Pour the mixture into the prepared dish and use the back of a spoon to even out the top. Place in the fridge for at least 1hr to set.*
5 *Once set, use the cling film or baking paper to help turn it out on to a serving platter. Garnish with some more crumbled nuts and biscuits, and finish with a scattering of orange zest.*

Edited by: Hayley Merrick **Recipes** Christina Soteriou **Pictures** Joe Woodhouse

Get your face in SHAPE

How to try facial yoga – the natural alternative to cosmetic procedures

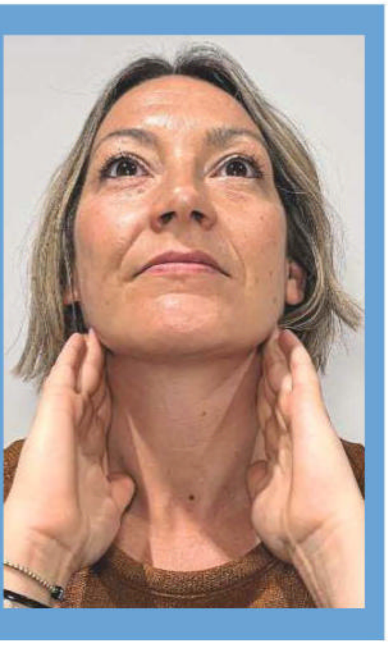
By Lucy Brown. **Pictures:** Ella Shire, Adobe Stock

We know the benefits of exercising our body to stay toned and fit – but the same goes for our face. Working facial muscles for just a couple of minutes a day can help to lift and sculpt your features with minimal effort and cost. Known as facial yoga, this skin-sculpting technique can not only improve appearance but also help to reduce stress and tension in the face. Skincare expert Rosi Chapman says the key to reaping the benefits of facial yoga is to remain consistent, 'You can create a routine to target specific areas. It's a great way of ensuring youthful, rejuvenated skin with long-term benefits.'

Prep and cleanse

'Face yoga isn't an exact science – there are many steps and exercises you can try, depending on the areas that you want to target,' says Rosi. 'My first step is to always cleanse the face first. Face yoga should never be practised with make-up on, and a washed face is a must to prevent bacteria clogging your pores. 'After completing your regular cleansing routine, thoroughly wash your hands to stop any dirt and germs transferring onto your face. Many people like to complete the face yoga process with a moisturising cream. I would always recommend using a cream that is known for its hydrating, nourishing properties.'

Ease your neck



This exercise can help to boost lymphatic drainage and prevent neck tension. 'Tilt your head back slightly into a gentle position. Place your second and third finger at the top of your neck, just below the jawline. Apply gentle, soft pressure as you move your way from this position all the way down to your collarbone,' says Rosi.

'Press into the collarbone for five to 10 seconds before releasing. Repeat this process, moving upwards and applying pressure to the jawline in a similar way. Continue this for one to three minutes and do this every day for long-term benefits.'

Tap to tidy

While there are many exercises that can be extremely beneficial for the face, Rosi says tapping in particular can be done by anyone and will bring a variety of results, including relaxation, reduced puffiness and increased circulation.

'Using a moisturiser, start at the middle of your forehead and use your eight fingertips (not including the thumb) to tap your skin. Continue this all along your face and down towards your jaw. Move down towards the neck and tap all across your chest and shoulders, continuing to the back of the neck and head. Next, rub your hands together for three to five seconds to generate heat and cup your hands over your face. This will help to activate the benefits. Breathe deeply for five to 10 seconds and then repeat this process for one to three minutes.'

Focus on the eyes

The eyes are an area of particular concern for many of us, as the skin here is thinner and it's often the first place for ageing lines and wrinkles to appear. Dark circles and puffiness are common complaints too, but fear not, this easy-does-it exercise will help.

'Place your fingers above the inside of your brows and gently tap your way to the outside of them,' says Rosi.

'It's extremely important to be gentle with your skin for this exercise as the skin around the eyes is very delicate and thin. This means that it can age quicker than most other areas of the face and body. It's vital to use a gentle finger with lightweight movements,' she adds.

'Use a clinically proven eye cream for this to make the movements smoother and more hydrating. Press into your temples for five to 10 seconds. Repeat this step for one to three minutes and complete this process daily to sustain the benefits.'

Boost the benefits

Rosi says that the best way to get the most out of your facial exercises is to ensure other aspects of your overall health are in check. 'To experience the full benefits of face yoga, it's important to also focus on other factors, including getting enough sleep, drinking plenty of water and eating a healthy, balanced diet. All of these factors work in harmony to provide an effective face yoga routine.'

Face yoga is also known to have a range of other health benefits. 'Facial massage is also used by professionals to help relieve and get rid of certain illnesses and bad habits,' says Rosi. 'For example, those who suffer with bad sinuses will be encouraged to massage the forehead, nose, cheeks and eyes to help release them. Headaches can also be banished with regular face yoga too.'

Scandi SNUG

Ride the Nordic wave and create a tranquil Scandinavian space that's calming, cool and welcoming

By Zoe Bishop

Smoked vase, Next, £30

Luana cushion, B&M, £10

Escape mandarin, lemon & pink grapefruit scented candles, B&M, £3

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THE PERSON
YOU WANT
TO BECOME
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DI FIGURE

Nordic retreat prints, Desenio, from £9.95

Nordic-inspired prints bring a sense of tranquillity to your bedroom

SCANDI RUSTIC

Rarebreed Tibetan sheepskin in dove grey, Jordhome.com, £150

Off-white pouffe, jysk.com, £69.99

Berber log basket, basketbasket.co.uk, £34

Invest in handmade sheepskin from the Tibetan mountains

Vase with eucalyptus, B&M, £15

Rustic LED hygge homes, norfiolkhygge.co.uk, from £13.99

Painted bowl, afternoah.com, £9.99

Grey sheepskin rug, John Lewis, £36

Natural wooden bar stool, Cult Furniture, £199

Scandi collection fabrics, Prestigious Textiles, from £36 per m

Mix and match touchy-feely textures for a cosy Scandinavian feel

Scandi desk, La Redoute, £173

Scandi pillar candle holders, Next, £16 for two

White & grey stoneware vase, clickstyle.co.uk £35

Ribbed throw, Primark, £24

Accent chair, Next, £299

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£50 Star letter

Lovely Joanna

How nice did Joanna Page come across in your interview (issue 1)? I just watched her new show *Wild Life* for the first time and I really admire her. Not only is it entertaining, but it's teaching viewers to have more empathy for all animals. A worthwhile cause.

Demi Roberts, Llanbedr

Going sober

I read your article about going sober in the new year (issue 1) with interest. I do Dry January every year and love it – this time I'm attempting to go two months. I'd recommend it to anyone, I never have as much energy as I do in the new year.

Betty Diamond, Cowes

Talking point

The NHS will be rolling out health checks in offices and factories under a new initiative to prevent heart disease – but some are arguing it's a step too far. So, we ask, should health MOTs be introduced in the workplace?

I can see the benefit, I would like to know what I could improve on!
Carla Pratt, via Facebook

This seems very nanny state to me. What next? Telling your bosses about your every cough and splutter?
P Clarence, via Facebook

I don't think it's a step too far at all – especially if it aids the NHS by meaning people can help themselves rather than something getting so bad they need to go to A&E.
Samantha Rudd, via Facebook

I worry it could cause people to panic unduly if, say, their blood pressure was slightly high or iron levels low. Having said that, I would take it if offered.
Maggie Barrett, via Facebook

By Stephen Leng. **Pictures** BBC, Shutterstock

THIS WEEK **Bella** LOVES... MyProtein Pots

If, like us, you are using a quiet January as a reason to get your health goals on track, MyProtein Pots are worth a try. At around 300 calories per serving, and in a range of delicious flavours, including Japanese Curry and Firecracker Chicken, they are a tasty, easy and purse-friendly way of hitting your protein goals on your lunchbreak – at work or home! Available at Co-op, Sainsbury's and Morrisons.

MYPROTEIN
Japanese Style
CHICKEN CURRY
with rice
32g PROTEIN
LOW IN FAT
306 KCAL

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‘I ran a marathon dressed as a pengu in honour of the love of my life’

MSRUK
Sarcoma
74400

Running the London Marathon last year

After his wife Kelly’s diagnosis, Michael Pendry, 45, knew he’d do anything to put a smile back on her face

During Kelly’s chemo

Bounding over to my wife Kelly, I couldn’t keep from grinning. ‘You’re going to be a penguin keeper for the day,’ I told her excitedly. Kelly absolutely adored penguins, and whenever we went to the zoo, she’d always make a beeline over to their enclosure. However, we knew the day would be bittersweet as Kelly had terminal cancer. We weren’t sure how long she had left, but I’d organised the day as a special memory for her.

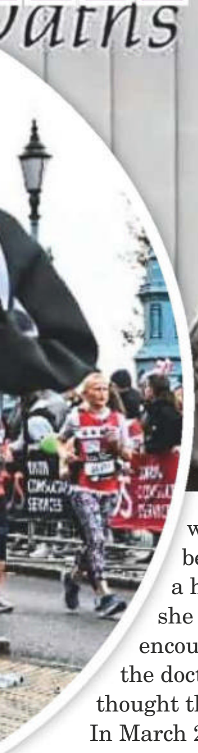
Kelly and I had met in 2006, when she came stumbling through the door at my office. After hearing an almighty crash, I looked up to see her lying on the floor. She jumped up with a laugh and introduced herself as a new colleague. She didn’t have a shed of embarrassment about tripping through the door, she just found it hilarious. Kelly was pretty, smart and funny – and I thought she was out of my league. We became firm friends, bonding over ’80s rock, but it took us five years to admit we were in love.

When we both ended our relationships, I headed over to Kelly’s house and we had our first kiss on the doorstep. As I was 6ft 4in and Kelly 5ft 2in, I had to bend down quite far! From then on, it was like we’d pressed the fast-forward button. I proposed by handing Kelly a piece of paper from my pocket, which read, *Will you marry me?*. Only 10 months after beginning our relationship, we tied the knot without telling anyone and spent our honeymoon in Paris. I never stopped thinking about how lucky I was to have Kelly as my wife. She was such an incredible person and my best friend.

‘We clung to each other’

A few days later, we found out Kelly was pregnant. We couldn’t wait to become parents, and when our beautiful son Samuel was born, we were over the moon. However, Kelly’s periods were really heavy after giving birth, and although the doctor said it was just her body getting back to normal, it never did.

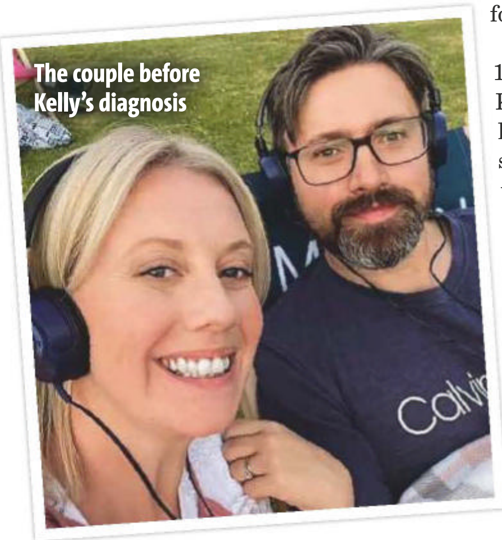
Two years later, our adorable daughter Isla was born. Kelly was such a brilliant mum to our little ones. But by 2016, Kelly’s periods were only getting heavier, and she started complaining about her swollen stomach. All that would fit her were her baggy dungarees, but the doctor fobbed her off with the Pill and even antidepressants. Neither worked, and Kelly only grew more exhausted. She knew something



Michael and Kelly with their kids

wasn't right and begged doctors for a hysterectomy, but she wasn't given one. I encouraged her to go to the doctor again, but she thought there was no point.

In March 2020, five years after Kelly first visited the GP, she was finally referred to a gynaecologist and diagnosed with fibroids. But when injections didn't help, she had a CT scan 18 months later. It was then, in September 2021, we were given devastating news – it wasn't fibroids, it was stage four cancer of the uterus, which had spread to her chest cavity, lungs and lymph nodes. 'We'll get through this,' I told her, but inside, I was panic-stricken. We then learnt Kelly's cancer was a rare form called leiomyosarcoma and the survival rate was only 5%. Back at our home in Hawarden, Flintshire, that night, we clung to each other after the kids were it bed, determined Kelly would be one of the people who made it. Kelly was only 39, and our kids were eight and six. There was still so much to look forward to.



The couple before Kelly's diagnosis

Brutal chemotherapy for 15 hours at a time made Kelly's hair fall out, and her mouth filled with sores. And as the months went on, she grew more poorly. We had to break the news to the kids that although Kelly was going to be here for as long as she could, they were going to lose their beautiful mum. No family should have to go through such heartbreak. I was desperate to give Kelly something to look forward to, so I asked her what was on her bucket list. 'Feeding the penguins at the zoo,' she replied with a smile, which led me to contact Chester Zoo and arrange for Kelly to be a keeper for the day. We set a date to visit in December 2023, and was told she would sit with the penguins in the enclosure and feed them. Kelly couldn't wait.

> **'This will be her legacy'**

But soon after, Kelly's legs started hurting and she couldn't climb the stairs, so I drove her to hospital for a scan. 'I'm sorry,' the doctor said. 'There's nothing more we can do.' The cancer had wrapped itself around her spine. She was too ill to go home, so I brought Samuel and Isla to the hospital to visit their mum for one last time. Somehow, Kelly kept the pain from her face as she hugged them goodbye.

On 3 December 2023 – one week before Kelly's planned trip to the zoo – Kelly was unconscious and I was holding her hand. The nurses put two knitted hearts close to hers, then suddenly her beautiful green-blue eyes opened and our gaze met for the last time. I looked at her with pure love as she passed away, aged just 42. Back home, I showed Samuel, 11, and Isla, nine, the hearts, and they instantly knew. They fell into my arms and we cried together.

Although Kelly never got to keep her date with the penguins, I wanted to honour her wish. So, I decided to run the London Marathon dressed as a penguin. As I sorted my outfit, I knew Kelly would have been hysterical with laughter to see me. I went round the local supermarkets and streets dressed in my costume to gain support. I fundraised for the charity Sarcoma UK, for other women like Kelly, to raise awareness of leiomyosarcoma. If Kelly had been diagnosed earlier, she might still be with us now.

On the day of the marathon in April last year, I ran the 26 miles and could almost hear Kelly's gorgeous laugh. Every step I took, I heard the crowd shout, 'Come on, penguin!' Kelly would have loved it. Overall, I raised over £3,000. I promised Kelly I'd keep going, and that's exactly what I'm doing, but I'll never stop missing her. Kelly was an incredible woman, and this will be her legacy.

By Lucy Laing and Sharon Wright

Dear Kate...

Counsellor Kate Medlin answers your personal, sexual and emotional problems

I don't want to know!

Q My dad has always been quite controlling towards my mum. Any decision, big or small, has to go through him. Since I left home I've started to understand that not everyone's parents are like this. He more or less bullied her, and although he wasn't exactly like that with me, I've started to understand through my own therapy that it has had an effect on me, especially when it comes to my own relationships. I've been encouraging my mum to stand up for herself, and even to get some therapy of her own. She took my advice and has been seeing someone for the past few months. She seems to be getting a lot out of it. The thing is, she has always talked to me when she's feeling sad, and I've comforted her since I was a small child, but now she's going into minute details about what she's had to put up with and I'm hearing things about my dad that I wish I didn't know. I don't want to put her off from exploring all of this, or talking to her therapist or friends about it, but am I being unfair to wish that she wasn't telling me?

A Your situation is not uncommon. When there is one parent who is quite controlling, the other parent can, at times, lean on one of the children as if they are their partner, because they don't feel loved or supported by their spouse. Whilst it can feel special to be a parent's best friend, it is a heavy weight to bear. It will have meant that there was very little space for your own feelings. Not only was it hard to see your dad fail to take your mum's feelings into consideration, but you also had to bear seeing your mum struggling to stand up for herself. But things are changing. You have gained your independence and have realised that something wasn't right and has left you

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She wants to get rid of me

Q I'm 19 and my parents split up when I was 12. My dad has been with his girlfriend for the past five years, and although things were OK at the start I feel like she doesn't like me anymore. She seems annoyed when I come to stay, like I just get in the way. She often cooks meals for two, and then 'remembers' that I'm there, and says she'll have to split it between the three of us. She moves my things around and talks about what she's going to do with my bedroom once I'm not using it anymore. Like she can't wait for the day when I'm not coming to stay every week. I've tried to talk to my dad about it, but he seems to agree with her – I'm the problem.

A I am so sorry that you're going through this. Whether your stepmother intends to make you feel unwelcome or not, they should be listening to how you are feeling. It isn't your job to fix this, as you're the child in this situation. I understand that you might fear pulling away from them right now, as you think this is what they want, but if it's hard for you to visit, maybe stay way for a few weeks? What you must avoid is acting into the idea of you being the problem, the difficult child who's causing trouble. This is tough when you feel so hurt. Your dad needs to step up and hear you. Be clear with him. Don't accuse her. Just say how you feel.

He won't say 'I love you'

Q My boyfriend and I have been together for nearly a year. We moved in together after six months, and generally things are going well. But he won't say, 'I love you.' I say it to him all the time, but he says he wants to wait until he really feels it. He says I'm putting pressure on him. He had been in a seven-year relationship before he met me, and she broke his heart. Am I paying the price for the way she treated him? I have trust issues, and this is making things worse. To be honest, I don't really know how he feels about me. He could leave at any moment. Am I wasting my time?

A You are both bringing your own issues to the table. He's been hurt by his previous partner and is maybe holding back in order to protect himself. And you are desperate to feel safe and secure within this relationship. I wouldn't put too much importance on him saying those three little words. He's moved in with you which shows some level of commitment and, as you say, things are going well. Actions

Letters and replies may be edited for length/clarity. **Pictures:** Shutterstock

Write to **Dear Kate**,
Bella, The Lantern,
75 Hampstead Road,
London, NW1 2PL, or email
bella.advice@bauermedia.co.uk.

Kate will attempt to respond
to as many letters as possible
through her page

needing to tend to those wounds. Plus, you've opened you mum's eyes and she's exploring things further with her therapist. I imagine that what's happening to your mum is that she's starting to feel validated. Both you, and now her therapist, seem to be showing her that she's not been in the wrong all these years, and it's helping her to find her voice after being silenced for so long. However, she now needs to learn when to use it, and the only way we learn about each other is to give feedback, in a kind and gentle way. It is more than fair for you to ask her to keep the details of their marriage away from you. Because whatever her relationship with your dad looks like, you are entitled to have your own separate bond that might feel different, and you want to keep it that way. You might have your own complicated feelings towards your dad, and don't need to add hers onto the pile.

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really do speak louder than words – someone else could be throwing the L-bomb around but treating you like dirt. Only you can decide if his actions are showing you something worth sticking round for.

Do you suffer from anxiety?
0906 652 5070
Getting over depression?
0906 652 5076
Bereavement
0906 652 5077
Impotence
0906 652 5078
Relationship breakdown
0906 652 5079

BELLA ADVICE LINES

Calls cost 65p per minute plus your network access charge. Calls last approximately four minutes. You must be over 18 to call and have the bill payer's permission. UK SP: Spoke 0333 202 3390

Horoscopes

By Jane Struthers **For the week 21–27 January**

Montell Douglas – 39 on 24 January

PISCES
20 February – 20 March

It's a buzzy and busy week, but being on the go the whole time will soon wear you out. You need to retreat into your own little world every now and then, especially on the 24th when you're very selective about the company you keep.

Theme of the week: Charisma

☎ 0906 650 7241

ARIES
21 March – 20 April

It's a big week for your friendships, although some are easier to deal with than others. On the 24th you enjoy being with someone whose enthusiasm is inspiring. Listen to your intuition on the 26th. It's working at a subtle level.

Theme of the week: The future

☎ 0906 650 7230

TAURUS
21 April – 21 May

Do yourself a favour and steer clear of power plays early in the week. This isn't a good time for anyone to insist on getting their own way, least of all you because it will backfire sooner or later. Social events see you shine on the 25th.

Theme of the week: Ambition Month

☎ 0906 650 7231

GEMINI
22 May – 21 June

Feeling hasty and agitated makes it easy to speak out of turn midweek, especially if you're getting heated about something that means a lot to you. A little quiet concentration makes all the difference to the end results on the 27th.

Theme of the week: Expansion

☎ 0906 650 7232

CANCER
22 June – 23 July

Your patience is tested once again midweek, and this time it will be very hard to rein yourself in. If you need to backtrack or apologise, the 25th is an ideal day for doing that with the aid of some gentle humour.

Theme of the week: Generosity

☎ 0906 650 7233

LEO
24 July – 23 August

Someone flexes their psychological muscles at the start of the week, making it difficult to deal with them. There's an element of control that makes you feel uncomfortable. Happily, the situation will lighten up considerably by the 24th.

Theme of the week: Coming from the heart

☎ 0906 650 7234

VIRGO
24 August – 23 September

If you're a typical Virgo you prefer to err on the side of caution for fear of not doing something properly, yet midweek you throw yourself headfirst into actions that would normally involve hours of heart-searching. Read between the lines on the 26th.

Theme of the week: Duties

☎ 0906 650 7235

AQUARIUS
21 January – 19 February

Take it easy! You're sure of yourself at the start of the week, which is helpful if you're hoping to make progress in a personal matter, but you must stop short of imposing your ideas on everyone around you. Give a family tradition an imaginative new twist on the 26th.

Theme of the week: Self-control

☎ 0906 650 7240

LIBRA
24 September – 23 October

Keep conversations lively and interesting this week. Instead of getting drawn into the same old topics, try introducing some fresh ideas and new things to talk about. Charm and co-operation are the keys to success on the 25th, especially if you're at work.

Theme of the week: Fun and games

☎ 0906 650 7236

SCORPIO
24 October – 22 November

Watch out for a stalemate as the week begins, particularly if no one wants to budge over something connected with your home and family. You spot some room for manoeuvre on the 24th, which lets you to take other people's opinions into consideration.

Theme of the week: Togetherness

☎ 0906 650 7237

SAGITTARIUS
23 November – 21 December

If you're unhappy about anything connected with money, you need to speak up midweek when you have the courage of your convictions. The 24th is perfect for keeping in touch with others. A delicate situation is made much easier on the 26th.

Theme of the week: Intentions

☎ 0906 650 7238

CAPRICORN
22 December – 20 January

Have you been viewing life from a subjective angle recently? If so, you need to balance that by putting yourself in someone else's shoes, otherwise they'll start complaining. On the 26th you're drawn to people who are engaging and that little bit different.

Theme of the week: Tactics

☎ 0906 650 7239

For a more detailed weekly forecast call the number for your star sign. Calls cost 65p per minute plus your network access charge. Weekly forecasts last approximately four minutes. Messages are pre-recorded. For entertainment and guidance purposes only. Users must be over 18. Service provider: Spoke. Customer service number 0333 202 3390 (9am-5pm)

Dog days out

Unleash the fun and spend some quality time with your pooch

DogFit Canicross

Offering a great way for dogs and their owners to bond while also staying fit and getting out in nature, DogFit Canicross has a range of classes, events and training sessions in various locations including Surrey, Kent and the Midlands – there is something for all abilities. It works by having the dog attached to their owner/runner via bungee cord, so the dog acts as the 'pacer' by pulling the runner along. This provides a full-body workout and encourages teamwork. Lots of DogFit CaniCross events and classes take place on scenic hiking trails, so lots of fun for everyone!

- Book at dogfit.co.uk

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www.f

Make a splash!

Canine Dip and Dive

The perfect day out for dogs (and owners!) that love to make a splash. With Canine Dip and Dive's main pool located in Suffolk, they also have pools in Norfolk, Essex and Devon. Whether your dog is a water lover or is a little more nervous, there is something for everyone. Confident dogs will love Buddy's Pool Party, a session where five dogs and their owners can have time in the pool to splash about and play with toys.

Buddy's Dip and Dive session is focused on jumping in the water, and there are also sessions for senior dogs and puppies. If your dog is particularly nervous, or you just fancy the pool to yourself, solo sessions are also available.

- Book at caninedipanddiveclub.co.uk

Time for tea

Jack and Beyond

Known for its dog-friendly approach, café Jack and Beyond in London's Battersea has its very own Dog Afternoon Tea. While humans can enjoy scones, pooches can tuck into a menu of Banana Wooffin, Carrot Pupcake, Lamb Liver & Veggie Stew and Peanut Butter & Oats Biscuit. If that wasn't enough, there are also free-flowing Puppuccinos included.

For dogs that are still hungry, Jack and Beyond also offers its own Dog Ice Cream for an extra sweet treat. For the ultimate seal of approval, all dog-friendly bites have been given the green light by the owner's dog, Loki.

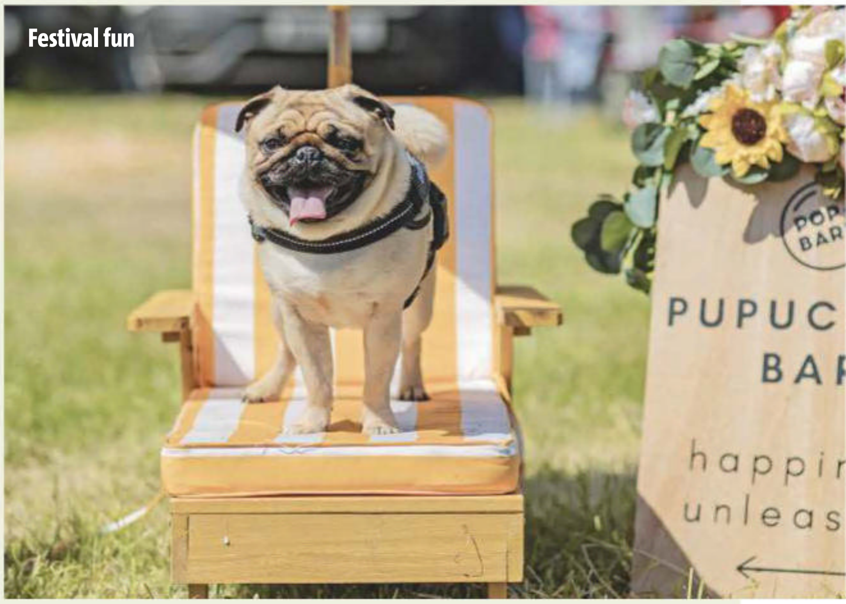
- **Book at jackandbeyond.com**

Dogstival

The ultimate doggy day out has to be a visit to Dogstival in New Forest. Taking place on 31 May and 1 June this year, the event is packed full of canine-approved entertainment. There is a Tog Dawg Show Ring, Barking Mad Family Area, Hound Dog Music Stage and a Dog Fashion Show, There is plenty of fun for people, too, including Barking Bingo and the Big Dog Pub Quiz.

New for 2025 is the Dogstival Derby where dachshunds, terriers and even pugs will be tearing around the arena over hurdles to be crowned champion.

- **Book at dogstival.co.uk**



Festival fun

ROSS & FRIENDS
SAFARI

The UK's largest dog park has loads of space for pooches to enjoy

Ross & Friends

The UK's largest 'dog only' park, Ross & Friends, is in Berkhamsted, offering a well-maintained area for both dogs and their owners to enjoy.

The 35-acre park has separate sections for dogs to explore, including a Sniffari, Crate Escape, Playland, Water Woodland and Main Safari area. There are also walking paths, open grassy spaces for play, and a dog-friendly pond for them to cool off during warmer months.

After playtime, dogs can rehydrate at the doggy bar and take a shower before heading home. Tickets must be booked online and then you'll be sent a gate access code one hour prior to your visit.

- **Book at rossandfriends.uk**

By Lucy Brown

TV WEEK

Sunshine with Alison

Alison Hammond's Florida Unpacked, Monday 27 January, BBC2

Before becoming a presenting legend, Alison Hammond was a tour rep – following in the footsteps of her mother who worked as a travel agent. Here, she takes us on a discovery trip to Florida with her son Aidan. The cost of visiting the Sunshine State has rocketed in recent years, so Alison is sharing the best hacks to save money – from family excursions to thrill-seeking adventures. 'Travel is in my blood,' says Alison. 'I was lucky and got to visit Florida from a young age and some of my happiest memories are tied to those first formative trips. I can't wait to share Florida's best kept secrets.'

FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

The Tattooist's Son: Journey to Auschwitz, Monday 27 January, Sky History/NOW

Gita and Lali Sokolov met as Slovakian Jewish prisoners at Auschwitz Concentration Camp during World War II. Here, their only son Gary Sokolov, now in his 60s, is determined to explore the horrors and secrets that consumed his mother and father long after they escaped and fled to Australia. Exploring his own experience with Intergenerational Holocaust Trauma, Gary goes back to the childhood homes of his parents, and bravely enters the Auschwitz site, revisiting the atrocities that happened. Woven with recorded interviews in Gita and Lali's own words and accounts from 100-year-old Holocaust survivor Abram Goldberg, this is a moving documentary.

Legendary chat

Brian and Maggie, Wednesday 29 January, Channel 4

Steve Coogan and Harriet Walter take us back to 1989 when journalist Brian Walden (Coogan), and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (Walter) came together for their last ever TV interview, a 45-minute showdown which became a national talking point and set in motion events that led to Thatcher's resignation. 'It's great to be telling a story from the era of the sorely missed forensic interview – two giants of their time locking horns to determine the future of Britain,' says Steve. It's little surprise that afterwards the pair never spoke again.

By Caroline Blight, Amber Connolly and Amy Rowland

TV timings are subject to change

Aye aye, Captain!

Wynne and Joanna: All At Sea, Monday 27 January, BBC1

Joanna Page and Wynne Evans are casting off on a boating adventure and sailing to Wales (where else?!). Exploring the coastline from Cardiff to St Davids to reconnect with their homeland, the pair spend quality time together and, most importantly, have a laugh. Accompanied by Skipper Wayne and Wynne's dog Ginny, their adventure takes them roughly 200 miles, stopping off at some special places along the way, including Penarth, where they join a rowing club; Barry Island, the setting for *Gavin and Stacey*; Joanna's hometown of Swansea and Carmarthenshire where Wynne spent his formative years.

UNSEEN WAR

Vietnam: The War That Changed America, Friday 31 January, Apple TV+

As we hit the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, this insightful documentary series tells the extraordinary human stories of those who lived through the conflict. Filmmakers went through over 1100 hours of archival footage from around the world to find never broadcast recordings of the highly documented war. Narrated by Ethan Hawke, each episode features powerful reunions more than half a century later and over six episodes, we see how modern America was forever changed by the war and the political and social cost it had on the nation.

SHOPPING SECRETS

Secrets of the Supermarket Buyers, Sunday 26 January, Channel 4

Denise Van Outen is exploring just how a small group of people influence what millions of British shoppers purchase every day thanks to their job as supermarket buyers in a new four-part docu. She finds out how they decide what we will be putting in our baskets, predict the next big thing and the lengths they go to in order to get products on the shelves. And Denise is thrilled with her new skill set. 'These shows have changed how I do my shopping and I've loved being able to spill the secrets with my friends and family too,' she admits.

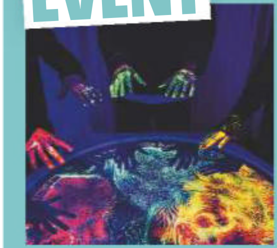
NEW THIS WEEK

FILM

The Brutalist

Holocaust survivor László Toth, a visionary Hungarian-Jewish architect, comes to the US to rebuild his life. Settling into Pennsylvania and poverty, he exchanges letters with his wife, who remains stranded in Europe. However, he hopes for a change in fortune and a taste of the American dream when he meets a wealthy industrialist who recognises his talent. Tipped for numerous awards.

EVENT



The Observatory

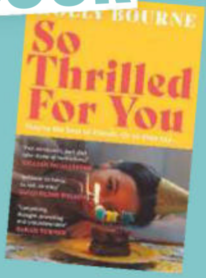
Banish your January blues at this unique art installation pop-up in the heart of London. The digital and virtual reality experience creates a calm environment to pause, reflect and reconnect through a blend of art and technology. Entry is free, with donations to charity CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) encouraged. Find out more at eventbrite.com.

So Thrilled for You

BOOK

by Holly Bourne (Hodder&Stoughton)

Nicki, Lauren, Charlotte and Steffi have been friends since uni, but life is pulling them apart. When Charlotte throws a baby shower for Nicki, simmering tensions explode. At the end of the day a fire engulfs the house, and everyone's a suspect – Steffi, child-free and judged; Charlotte, struggling with envy; Lauren, overwhelmed by motherhood; and even Nicki, who resented the shower. And the shocking truth will stun everyone... An absolute must-read with an ending you'll never see coming.



BOOK

HOW TO SLEEP AT NIGHT
Elizabeth Harris

How to Sleep at Night

by Elizabeth Harris (The Borough Press)

Ethan and Gabe, a suburban couple with a daughter, face turmoil when Ethan announces his Republican congressional run requiring progressive Gabe's blessing. Meanwhile, Kate, a jaded political reporter, grapples with her ex-Nicole's unexpected messages and her brother Ethan's controversial campaign. Family tensions soon rise – but where will it end? A sharp exploration of ambition, and the delicate balance between political divides.

An Almost Perfect Summer

BOOK

by Jill Mansell (Review)

Nella finds Nick irresistible, but distance keeps them apart. When she loses her job, a new role at a Cotswolds retreat seems perfect – except Nick is her boss, making him off-limits. Meanwhile, reclusive Hollywood star Lizzie seeks solace at the retreat. Despite swearing off men, she's drawn to Nick – and local Matthew. As emotions tangle and secrets emerge, lives intertwine, forcing everyone to confront their fears. A great book to curl up with.

Jill Mansell
an almost perfect summer

‘You still v
as yo

Working her Magic on the radio

Nicki Chapman boasts decades of experience in the media industry. Not only did she work as a respected PR for stars including the Spice Girls, Take That, Amy Winehouse and Kylie Minogue, but she became a household name in the early noughties with TV judging roles on *Popstars* and *Pop Idol*, before going on to present shows such as *Escape To The Country* and *Wanted Down Under*.

And now, the media expert, 58 – who is married to music producer Dave Shackleton – has added another string to her bow by landing a sparkling new role on Magic Radio. In addition to her excitement about being on the airwaves, Nicki also chats to us about her days as a PR…

‘I’m a home bird’

Tell us about your Magic Radio show

I’ve worked in radio for many years. I’ve been on BBC Radio 2 and sat in for Zoe Ball and Claudia Winkleman, but this is the first time I actually have my own show [the iconic Mellow Magic show has been running since 2016 bringing listeners relaxing timeless classics]. We’re getting you set up for the evening with some beautiful tunes.

What do you love about radio?

The intimacy. When you’re on the radio, it’s only you and that other person who’s listening. It’s just the two of you, and I love that. When you’re on television, it’s visual as well as spoken. But with radio, it’s much more personal.

What’s your perfect mellow evening?

In spring, summer and autumn, I love coming home and sitting in the garden, listening to some music and perhaps having a drink and a few nibbles. My husband and I have quite busy lives, and that’s our choice because of the careers we’ve chosen. I don’t need to go out every night, because I’m

want challenges u get older’

Nicki Chapman has ticked off a lot of boxes in her career, but she’s not finished yet

With the *Pop Idol* crew, Neil Fox, Simon Cowell and Pete Waterman

out during the day – I’m with people and I’m stimulated. I don’t need to go out all weekend either! I’m a home bird.

Tell us about some of the big nights out you had in the past – who is fun to party with?

I saw extraordinary things travelling the world with the Spice Girls and Take That. I’ve written a book called *So Tell Me What You Want* because my life looking after those bands was extraordinary. I went to Hong Kong, South Africa and Japan – places I never thought I would get to see. I think the best times for going out would be an after-party with Take That back in the ’90s.

Was it wild?

Messy, yes. But if we were working, I couldn’t really go for it because I knew I had to be on my A-game the next day. The best nights out were when I knew I wasn’t going to be with the band the next day, so I didn’t have to be quite so professional and could have a drink. I remember going to the MTV Awards and not remembering getting home!

What’s your take on the recent boyband documentaries on TV?

I think the media industry has changed. Everybody’s learned a lesson, and we continue to learn as well. Also, the bands themselves – they’ve got to be accountable for their own actions. If you’ve got a really heavy schedule and you’re out getting wasted the night before, then no one can help you with that. You’ve got to look after your own health and surround yourself with people who will give you advice you’re prepared to listen to, even if you don’t agree with it. When you have artists who have the strength to say, ‘I’m taking a break,’ everyone respects them for it.

> **‘I let myself go’**

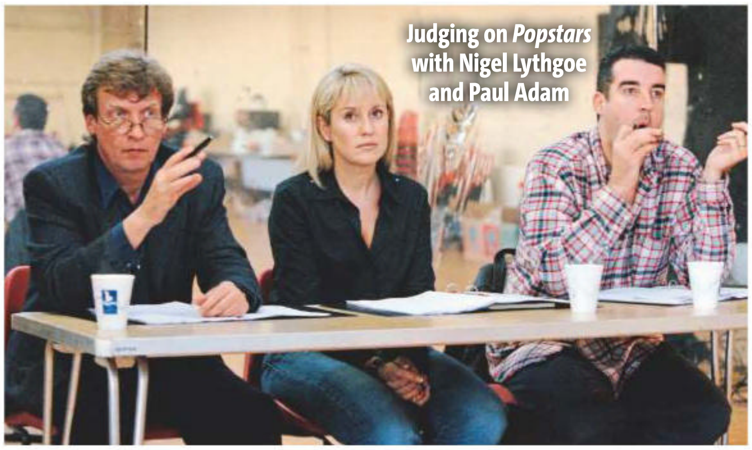
How do you recharge and look after yourself?

I let myself go last summer because I was working, but that’s no excuse. You can always find time, and I haven’t, so I’ve had to give myself a bit of a talking to. My back is quite sore at the moment, and that’s because I haven’t been going to the gym. So I’ve started Pilates. This year, I’ll be in much more of a routine with my radio show, and I like a routine. It means I can go to the gym and get to Pilates, I can go walking, and I can do work in my local charity shop, which I adore.

Is there anything else you want to achieve in 2025?

I’m going back to *Escape To The Country*, so I’ll be filming a brand-new series of that. I’m really looking forward to getting back into my garden too – I brought in a new colour scheme. Then a little bit later on in the year, I’ll take a lovely holiday somewhere. For me, this is going to be such an exciting start to the year because I’m doing something new. The older you get, you still want these challenges. I’ve got lots that I want to achieve.

● *Nicki is the new host of the iconic Mellow Magic show. Tune into Magic Radio every Monday to Thursday from 8pm.*



Judging on *Popstars* with Nigel Lythgoe and Paul Adam

By Charlotte Roberts and Millie Payne. **Pictures** Brett Cove/SOPA Images/Shutterstock/instagram/nicki chapman/PA Images / Alamy Stock Photo

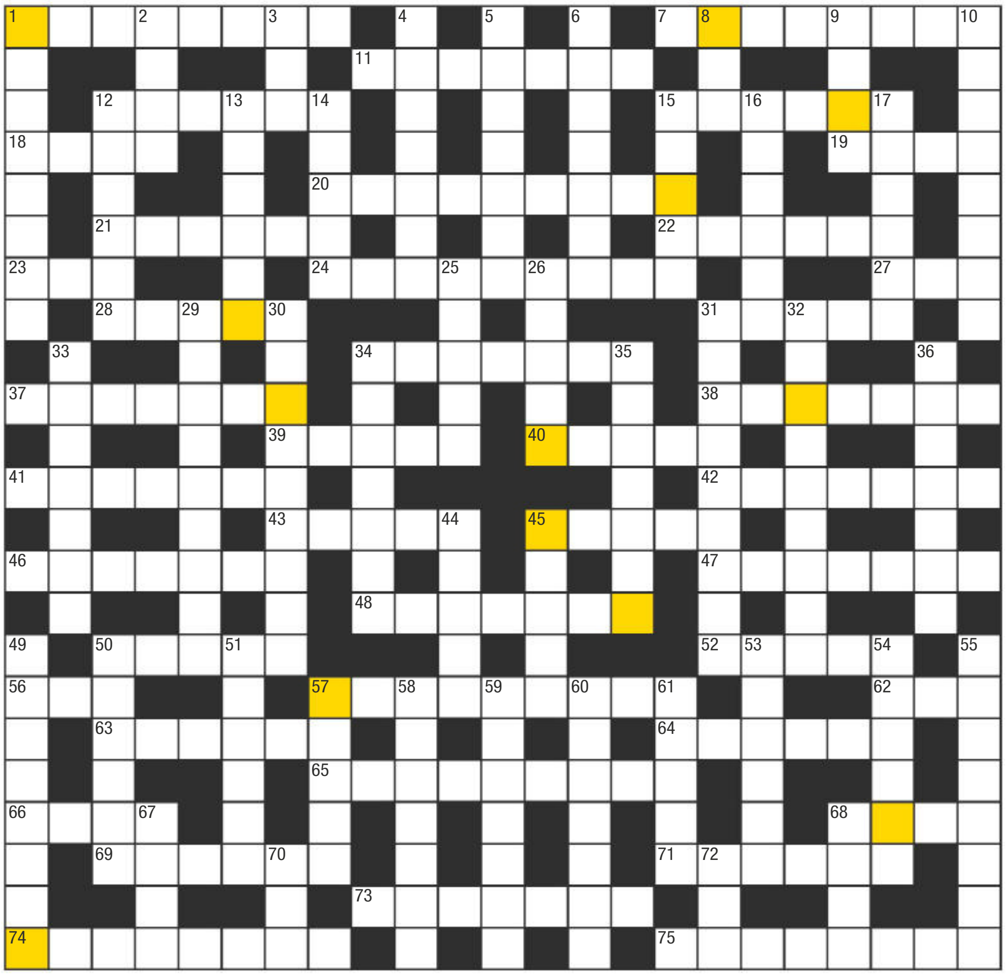
Puzzles

YOU could be in with a chance of winning £200

PRIZE crossword

WIN £200

Solve the crossword to find, reading from top to bottom in the shaded squares, the name of a US actor. This is your competition entry answer. See the 'How to enter' panel, below right.



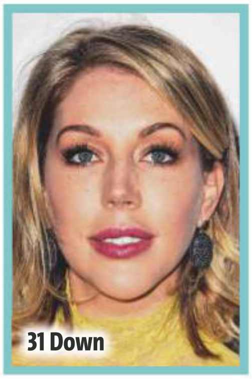
Across

1 (Of a boat) overturned in the water (8)
7 Michael Jackson hit featuring a 'rap' by Vincent Price (8)
11 Clam soup? (7)
12 Pedestrian underpass (6)
15 Sachet for making a cuppa (6)
18 *Corrie*'s Carla Connor, Alison - - - (4)
19 Fencing sword, or aluminium wrap (4)
20 *Braveheart* star (3,6)
21 Esteemed chef, Marco - - - White (6)
22 Rodent kept as a pet (6)
23 Anger, fury (3)
24 Mythical Greek youth who fell in love with his own reflection (9)
27 Frozen water (3)
28 Eighteen holes of golf? (5)
31 - - - Minogue, Aussie pop icon (5)
34 Final part of a flight? (7)
37 Old Testament book, anagram of HAIL MAC (7)
38 Knotted (up) (7)
39 Ruffle or frill of gathered cloth (5)
40 US country singer, - - - Brooks (5)
41 Muse front man, Matt - - - (7)
42 State of exalted happiness (7)
43 Pink - - -, British rock band whose hits include *Another Brick In The Wall* (5)
45 Arwen in *The Lord Of The Rings* trilogy, Liv - - - (5)
46 Pungent gas, anagram of MOAN AIM (7)
47 Chemical element with the symbol Ir (7)
48 Baltic country with the capital Tallinn (7)
50 Internet connection device (5)
52 Big occurrence? (5)
56 Zodiac Lion (3)
57 Famous painting by Edvard Munch (3,6)
62 Paddle (3)
63 Barney - - -, neighbour of Fred Flintstone (6)
64 - - - hound, long-haired dog breed (6)
65 Bad dream (9)
66 Petrol, eg (4)
68 Ride the waves (4)
69 Star of *The Odd Couple*, Jack - - - (6)
71 UK's continent (6)
73 Previously (7)
74 Emily - - -, *Paddington In Peru* actress, pictured above left (8)
75 Borscht ingredient (8)

74 Across

Down

1 Eighties film starring Tom Cruise as a bartender (8)
2 Garden pest (4)
3 Historical period (3)
4 Spine - - -, scary book (7)
5 One of Kenya's official languages (7)
6 Phil Collins's former band (7)
8 Colour (3)
9 Piece of foliage (4)
10 Accumulative addition of unwon lottery prize money (8)
12 Concealed shooter (6)
13 System of rabbit burrows (6)
14 Aden's country (5)
15 Hair-curlers (5)
16 Brawl, disturbance (6)
17 No 1 footballer? (6)
25 Narrow water vessel (5)
26 Broken-arm support (5)
29 Quentin Tarantino film, *Django* - - - (9)
30 Milk production site (5,4)
31 - - - Ryan, Canadian comedian, pictured right (9)
32 Decisive victory in an election (9)
33 Sicily's capital (7)
34 Sugar found in milk (7)
35 Largest of the great apes (7)
36 Temperature scale (7)
44 Reality show set in a restaurant with Fred Sirieix, *First* - - - (5)
45 Male singing voice (5)
49 Raised area in railway station (8)
50 Tasty bite (6)
51 Symbol (6)
53 Strength, energy (6)
54 - - - twister, tricky phrase to say aloud (6)
55 Ancient relic (8)
57 Projection fitting a mortise (5)
58 Clever person, brainbox (7)
59 Skin at the base of a nail (7)
60 (Of time) passed by (7)
61 - - - Binchy, Irish author (5)
67 Departed (4)
68 Spiked wheel on a cowboy boot (4)
70 Dedicated poem (3)
72 Ultravox singer, Midge - - - (3)


31 Down

Crossword Neil Locker. **Pictures** Shutterstock.

COMPETITION AND GIVEAWAY RULES Competitions open to residents of the UK (including Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), Eire or BFPOs, aged 18 or over, except Bauer Media employees, its affiliated companies, any promotional partners, or their families and anyone connected with the competitions. Enter by text, online or phone. No purchase necessary. Answers must be the product of own work. Unless expressly stated, travel expenses and spending money is not included. There is no cash alternative to prizes and no alternative holidays can be offered. Prizes are not transferable. No responsibility can be accepted for entries that are delayed, damaged, mislaid or wrongly delivered, or for any loss in service of the online entry mechanism or for entries lost, delayed or corrupted due to computer error in transit. Only one entry per person. A winning entry is the first correct answer drawn after the closing date. For a free entry, enter online at bellamagazine.co.uk. Prizewinners will be notified by post on headed paper or by official email. The results are published. Winners must agree to the publication of their names, age and photos. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into. Your information will only be used to administer promotions in accordance with our privacy policy. Entry implies acceptance of these rules. Promoter: H Bauer Publishing. Full T&Cs can be found at bauerlegal.co.uk/competition-terms.html

Sudoku

Fill in the blank squares with the numbers 1 to 9 so that each row, each column and each smaller 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9.

EASY

		2	6		4	7		
	3		9		8		6	
9								4
	8	9				6	1	
3	7						8	2
	4	1				5	7	
4								5
	9		1		2		3	
		7	3		5	1		

HARD

3	5					1	7	
1				4		9		
8				2			5	4
		7		3				
			1	9	2			
				5		4		
5	4			6				1
		2						3
	1	8		7			4	5

Take a Break Su-doku

***Take A Break Su-doku* magazine, containing over 80 fun-to-solve puzzles, is on sale now.**

PRIZE Arrowword

WIN £200

Solve the clues, writing your answers in the directions shown by the arrows, to reveal, reading down the shaded squares, the country in which chefs can train at the Prue Leith Culinary Institute. This is your competition entry answer. See the 'How to enter' panel below.

Draw breath – in shock, eg	▼	Suppress	Roof slate	▼	Jesse in *Breaking Bad* (5,4)	Waken	▼	Concrete ingredient	▼	Cope	Intimidate	Tennis champion, Rafa ---	▼	Firm's meeting (1,1,1)
Hollywood dance icon, Fred ---	▶	🟨 ▼	▼			▼		Between	▶		🟨 ▼	▼		Radio time signal
Mix with a spoon	▶				Sign	▶				Alluring woman?	▶			▼
▶						🟨		Cancelled – a TV show, eg	▶				'Let it stand'	
Play's closing comment	Marsh	▶			Kiss!	▶				Coarse file	▶		▼	
Queen of ---, OT figure	Head ---, person in charge		Writer of verse	▶				Praises highly	▶				🟨	
▶	🟨 ▼									Extent		Model's stance		Hindu Festival of Colours
Knotty protuberance on a tree		Misuses, maltreats	Umpires?							▶		▼		▼
▶		▼	▼							Of the nose	Love deeply		Bullets, eg	
Civil honour (1,1,1)	▶			Language spoken in Iran						▶	▼		🟨 ▼	
Sulking fit	▶		🟨	▼						Star of *The Substance*, --- Moore	▶			
▶										Sweetbreads, eg		Rests (against)		Steps
Dance, --- nova	Wild mountain goat		Curves		Roman garment	▼	Drop a hint (3,2)	Epic story	Lowest deck of a ship	▶ ▼	🟨	▼		▼
▶	🟨 ▼		▼		▼			▼	Charge for services	▶			Film director, --- Burton	
Complete failures		Rampage	▶				TV drama, --- *Wiedersehen, Pet*	▶			Cadet fliers (1,1,1)	▶	▼	🟨
▶				Award?	▶				--- *Get Your Gun*, musical	▶				
Sporty Spice (3,1)		--- *Lake*, ballet	▶		🟨		Rock front man, --- Rose	▶			Text message? (1,1,1)	▶		

Prue Leith

SOLUTIONS

Sudoku solutions can be found online now at bellamagazine.co.uk

ISSUE 1
PRIZE ANSWERS
Crossword
Mawaan Rizwan
Arrowword
Britney Spears

Full solutions to this week's prize puzzles can be found at bellamagazine.co.uk after the closing date: 3 February 2025

HOW TO ENTER THE PRIZE COMPETITIONS

BY PHONE: 0901 130 0237

When asked for the issue number, key in 03. Calls cost 50p per call, plus your network access charge. (UK readers only.) You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission.

BY TEXT: 65115

Text BEL03 then a space followed by your name, house number or name, your postcode, then your answer(s), all separated by a space, to 65115, eg Jane Smith 10 SL5 9JN Answer(s). Texts cost 50p plus your standard network rate. Keep texts under 160 characters or you may be charged for more than one text.

● If you enter after the closing date, you will not be entered but may be charged. Not available in Eire. Please ensure your entry is completed correctly, as incorrect entries may be charged but not entered. This is not a subscription service.

● **You are automatically consenting to receive further communications about these competitions from us via SMS text. You can opt out of this at any time by texting STOP to 65115. This will be charged** at your standard network rate, but you will need to do this each time you enter the competition by text. Your personal data will (regardless of whether you opt out) always be used to process your entry. For further information, see general terms and privacy policy at Bauerdatapromise.co.uk.

● Lines close at 11.59pm on 3 February 2025.

Phone UK SP: Spoke (0333 202 3390). Text SP: Bauer Media. Email smshelp@bauermedia.co.uk or call 0330 159 2525.

OR ENTER ONLINE:
Bellamagazine.co.uk

Continued over the page...

Puzzles contin

BITS & PIECES

We've taken a completed crossword puzzle and cut it up to give 24 pieces. Your task is to rebuild the puzzle with the help of the piece that we've already placed in the grid.

L	■	T
E	■	A
G	E	B

E	A	R
M	■	O
O	S	T

I	S	T
L	■	Y
T	Y	■

■	G	N
A	G	■
■	E	V

O	■	N
P	E	T
H	■	■

■	P	L
B	■	E
R	N	A

P	I	L									
H	■	■									
I	■	I									

C	■	A
■	■	R
R	R	Y

~~P~~	~~I~~	~~L~~
~~H~~	■	■
~~I~~	■	~~I~~

E	■	I
■	F	L
T	■	I

L	I	N
O	■	F
S	L	A

■	■	L
A	S	E
T	■	M

■	I	N
A	L	■
L	E	S

E	R	■
■	A	P
N	G	■

O	R	I
■	■	L
S	H	E

U	M	P
■	■	A
L	■	R

I	■	F
E	X	■
F	■	P

G	L	U
I	■	N
F	A	C

T	■	H
E	■	■
D	I	R

C	L	I
A	■	R
S	■	A

E	S	T
■	T	E
R	A	■

Y	O	W
■	V	■
■	A	L

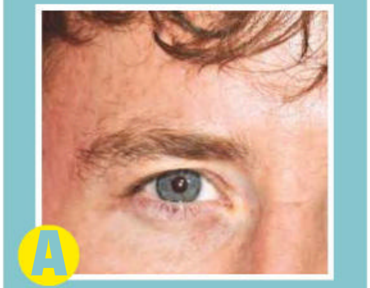
O	M	E
M	■	N
I	C	T

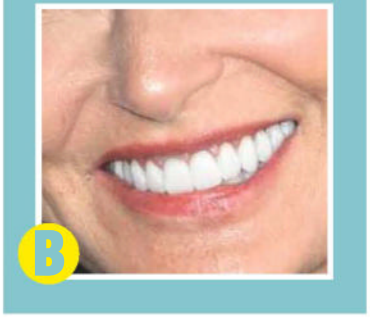
N	E	■
■	A	■
B	L	E

F	E	R
I	■	■
N	F	E

GUESS THE CELEB

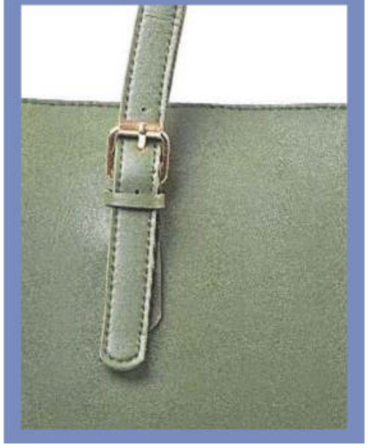
Can you name these stars by seeing close ups of their famous faces?


A


B

WHAT ON EARTH?

Can you guess what everyday object this super zoomed in photo shows?



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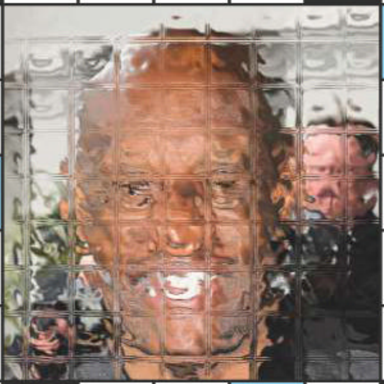
ROUND SUM

Work out the solution to the sum by following the instructions contained within the arrow.

16
x9
HALVE IT
÷6
DOUBLE IT
-3
+2
x4
÷2
+3

CODEBREAKER

When you've solved this codebreaker, the identity of our disguised celebrity will be revealed in the shaded squares. Then, the same code will help you complete the lower grid and read a mystery fact about them.



■	23	■	5	24	25	1 I	24	16	1	17	20	■	6	■
■	6	■	24	■	■	2 M	■	1	■	■	1	■	24	■
20	10	21	24	■	23	3 P	10	26	9	■	13	25	10	14
■	9	■	13	■	7	■	■	10	■	■	8	■	16	■
23	24	24	■	■	5	7	19	25	■	11	■	22	12	24
8	■	18	10	2						4	23	24	■	17
4	■	24	■	7						24	■	13	■	11
2	10	15	10	19						10	22	1	24	4
5	■	8	■	1						23	■	10	■	1
25	■	7	19	17						12	24	17	■	26
24	10	26	■	20	■	10	14	25	24	■	■	8	7	12
■	21	■	10	■	■	2	■	■	10	■	10	■	3	■
18	4	2	3	■	23	3	1	25	8	■	15	6	1	3
■	26	■	23	■	■	25	■	24	■	■	6	■	4	■
■	24	■	24	14	3	24	26	8	1	23	24	■	2	■

A B C D E F G H ~~I~~ J
K L ~~M~~ N O ~~P~~ Q R S
T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
I	M	P										
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

23	8	7	7	22	■	10	23	■	10	17	■	1	17	22	24	3	24	17	22	24	17	8
					■			■			■											

3	10	26	25	1	10	2	24	17	8	10	26	12	■	15	10	17	22	1	22	10	8	24
													■									

Pictures Shutterstock

Continued over the page...

Puzzles contin

NATIONAL DEFICIT

Travel around the grid looking for all these countries that are larger in size than the UK.

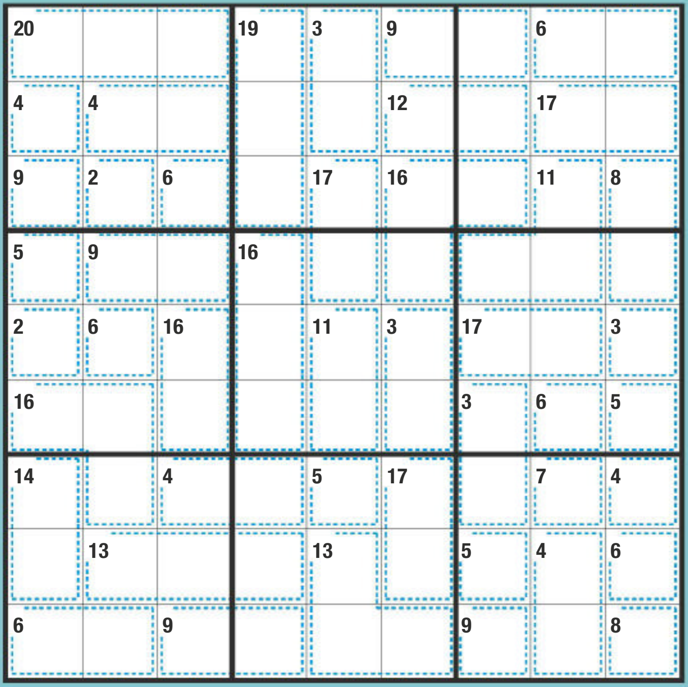
I	T	A	H	S	O	U	T	H	A	F	R	I	C	A	Q	P	C	M
N	E	W	J	I	T	G	B	I	N	N	N	R	K	Z	D	S	F	O
A	A	I	B	I	M	A	N	A	I	B	A	R	A	I	D	U	A	S
I	U	E	A	S	X	A	N	I	T	N	C	W	O	A	D	V	O	R
S	P	I	A	S	T	F	U	N	N	A	D	Y	S	M	G	N	C	S
Y	A	E	N	I	U	G	I	A	E	L	L	O	R	T	A	H	I	T
A	S	A	R	R	N	H	Y	Z	G	U	M	O	N	G	O	L	I	A
L	R	U	S	S	I	A	B	N	R	R	R	T	G	E	I	B	N	O
A	A	S	E	D	T	N	C	A	A	Y	E	M	E	N	S	A	A	L
M	O	T	F	D	E	I	P	T	V	N	G	U	K	R	A	I	N	E
G	L	R	T	E	D	S	R	I	T	E	I	S	A	U	T	R	A	U
M	E	A	D	R	S	T	D	N	A	L	N	I	F	I	V	E	A	Q
Y	C	L	L	N	T	A	O	N	M	S	H	E	L	E	O	G	R	I
A	N	I	A	D	A	N	A	C	A	N	S	T	Z	C	O	L	A	B
N	P	A	A	I	T	L	D	N	L	L	Y	K	C	U	T	A	I	M
M	E	A	M	U	E	L	I	B	Y	A	N	O	M	A	E	Y	B	A
A	S	C	E	R	S	N	L	A	W	R	R	E	D	D	O	L	M	Z
R	T	S	E	G	E	I	L	R	H	O	B	A	E	O	H	I	A	O
O	R	P	W	E	I	G	O	T	M	T	S	N	U	R	D	E	Z	M
F	A	V	I	E	T	N	A	M	L	E	P	A	R	A	G	U	A	Y

AFGHANISTAN
ALGERIA
ANGOLA
ARGENTINA
AUSTRALIA
BOTSWANA
CANADA
ECUADOR
FINLAND
GERMANY
GREENLAND
GUINEA
INDONESIA
LIBYA
MALAYSIA
MAURITANIA
MONGOLIA
MOROCCO
MOZAMBIQUE
MYANMAR
NAMIBIA
NIGER
NORWAY
PARAGUAY
RUSSIA
SAUDI ARABIA
SOUTH AFRICA
TANZANIA
THAILAND
UKRAINE
UNITED STATES
VENEZUELA
VIETNAM
YEMEN
ZAMBIA

ued...

KILLER SUDOKU

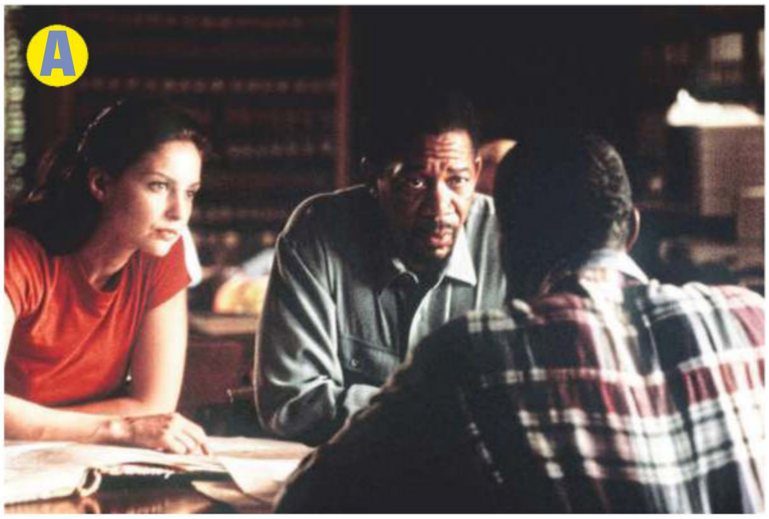
Killer Sudoku is based on the traditional sudoku grid and every column, every row and every 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 to 9. But there's a twist – the dotted squares must be filled with numbers that add up to that in the left corner.

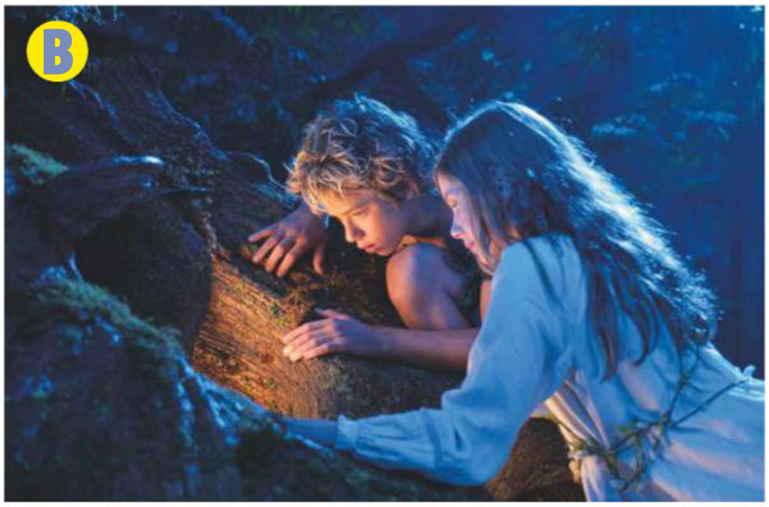


20			19	3	9		6	
4	4				12		17	
9	2	6		17	16		11	8
5	9		16					
2	6	16		11	3	17		3
16						3	6	5
14		4		5	17		7	4
	13			13		5	4	6
6		9				9		8

GUESS THE MOVIE

Can you name these famous films from looking at just one scene?





Pictures Shutterstock

THIS WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

BITS & PIECES

P	I	L	F	E	R	■	P	L	U	M	P
H	■	■	I	■	■	B	■	E	■	■	A
I	■	I	N	F	E	R	N	A	L	■	R
L	I	N	E	R	■	I	■	F	E	A	R
O	■	F	■	A	P	E	X	■	M	■	O
S	L	A	N	G	■	F	■	P	O	S	T
O	■	N	■	I	N	C	L	I	N	E	■
P	E	T	A	L	■	A	■	R	■	A	■
H	■	■	L	E	S	S	■	A	B	L	E
Y	O	W	L	■	T	E	S	T	■	■	L
■	V	■	E	■	A	■	T	E	A	S	E
■	A	L	G	E	B	R	A	■	T	■	M
G	L	U	E	■	I	■	G	N	O	M	E
I	■	N	■	F	L	A	G	■	M	■	N
F	A	C	T	■	I	■	E	V	I	C	T
T	■	H	I	S	T	O	R	I	C	■	A
E	■	■	L	■	Y	■	■	L	■	■	R
D	I	R	T	Y	■	S	H	E	R	R	Y

GUESS THE CELEB

A Danny Jones

B Demi Moore

WHAT ON EARTH?

Handbag

ROUND SUM

49

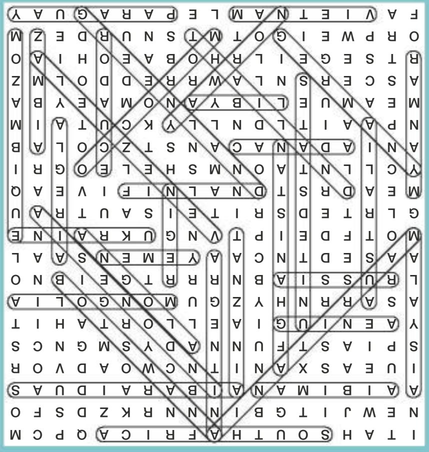
CODEBREAKER

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
I	M	P	U	B	H	O	T	K	A	Q	Y	F
14	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**
X	C	V	N	J	W	G	Z	D	S	E	L	R

■	S	■	B	E	L	I	E	V	I	N	G	■	H	■
■	H	■	E	■	■	M	■	I	■	■	I	■	E	■
G	A	Z	E	■	S	P	A	R	K	■	F	L	A	X
■	K	■	F	■	O	■	■	A	■	■	T	■	V	■
S	E	E	■	■	B	O	W	L	■	Q	■	D	Y	E
T	■	J	A	M						U	S	E	■	N
U	■	E	■	O						E	■	F	■	Q
M	A	C	A	W						A	D	I	E	U
B	■	T	■	I						S	■	A	■	I
L	■	O	W	N						Y	E	N	■	R
E	A	R	■	G	■	A	X	L	E	■	■	T	O	Y
■	Z	■	A	■	■	M	■	■	A	■	A	■	P	■
J	U	M	P	■	S	P	I	L	T	■	C	H	I	P
■	R	■	S	■	■	L	■	E	■	■	H	■	U	■
■	E	■	E	X	P	E	R	T	I	S	E	■	M	■

Celebrity Shaun Wallace **Fact** Stood as an independent parliamentary candidate.

WORDSEARCH



I	T	A	H	S	O	U	T	H	A	F	R	I	C	A	Q	P	C	M
N	E	W	J	I	T	G	B	I	N	N	N	R	K	Z	D	S	F	O
A	A	I	B	I	M	A	N	A	I	B	A	R	A	I	D	U	A	S
I	U	E	A	S	X	A	N	I	T	N	C	W	O	A	D	V	O	R
S	P	I	A	S	T	F	U	N	N	A	D	Y	S	M	G	N	C	S
Y	A	E	N	I	U	G	I	A	E	L	L	O	R	T	A	H	I	T
A	S	A	R	R	N	H	Y	Z	G	U	M	O	N	G	O	L	I	A
L	R	U	S	S	I	A	B	N	R	R	R	T	G	E	I	B	N	O
A	A	S	E	D	T	N	C	A	A	Y	E	M	E	N	S	A	A	L
M	O	T	F	D	E	I	P	T	V	N	G	U	K	R	A	I	N	E
G	L	R	T	E	D	S	R	I	T	E	I	S	A	U	T	R	A	U
M	E	A	D	R	S	T	D	N	A	L	N	I	F	I	V	E	A	Q
Y	C	L	L	N	T	A	O	N	M	S	H	E	L	E	O	G	R	I
A	N	I	A	D	A	N	A	C	A	N	S	T	Z	C	O	L	A	B
N	P	A	A	I	T	L	D	N	L	L	Y	K	C	U	T	A	I	M
M	E	A	M	U	E	L	I	B	Y	A	N	O	M	A	E	Y	B	A
A	S	C	E	R	S	N	L	A	W	R	R	E	D	D	O	L	M	Z
R	T	S	E	G	E	I	L	R	H	O	B	A	E	O	H	I	A	O
O	R	P	W	E	I	G	O	T	M	T	S	N	U	R	D	E	Z	M
F	A	V	I	E	T	N	A	M	L	E	P	A	R	A	G	U	A	Y

KILLER SUDOKU

7	8	5	9	1	3	6	4	2
4	3	1	6	2	5	7	8	9
9	2	6	4	8	7	3	5	1
5	1	8	3	9	6	4	2	7
2	6	7	5	4	1	8	9	3
3	4	9	8	7	2	1	6	5
6	9	3	1	5	8	2	7	4
8	7	4	2	3	9	5	1	6
1	5	2	7	6	4	9	3	8

GUESS THE MOVIE

A Kiss The Girls

B Peter Pan

*NB for Prize Puzzles information, see page 53

RUNNING WILD

These celebs like to keep themselves fit with a regular run

CHRIS HEMSWORTH
Obviously running alone isn't enough to give you the actor's muscular physique – his most famous role is that of a God/ Superhero after all – but it certainly helps. Chris, 41, has previously waxed lyrical about using high-speed, high-intensity sprint intervals to break up his workout routine.

CoppaFeel!
DERMOT
18

DERMOT O'LEARY
A proud patron of breast cancer awareness charity CoppaFeel!, last year the presenter, 51, took part in the London Half Marathon. Post run, Dermot rewarded himself with a pint of Guinness and a pub roast.

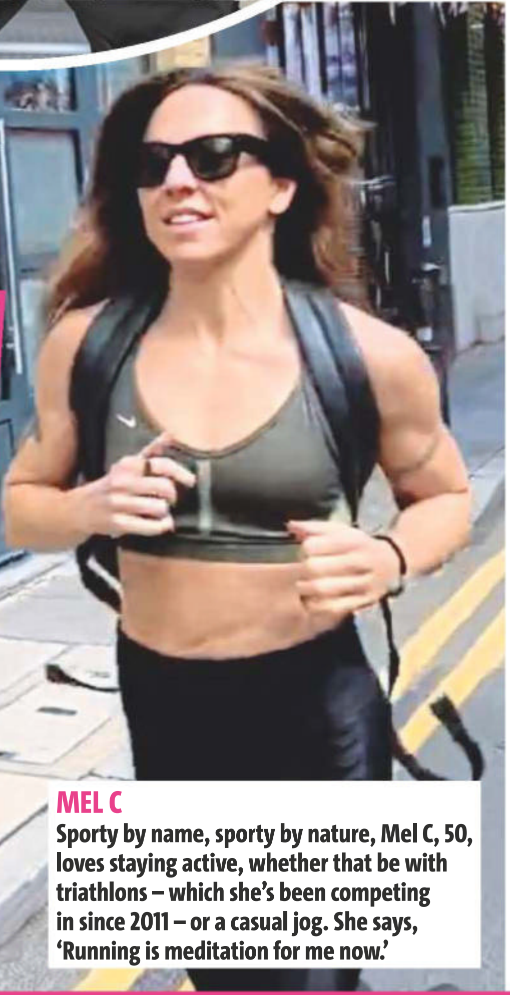
SPENCER MATTHEWS
Last year Spencer, 36, raised over £600,000 for charity and earned himself a World Record when he ran 30 marathons in 30 days across the Jordanian dessert in the peak of summer. In 2025 he's hoping to complete seven ironmans in seven continents.

10km:
"FINISH STRONG LFG!!"

GABBY ALLEN
If you need some motivation to start running, Gabby's your girl! The 32-year-old TV star says of discovering her love of running last year, 'Reframe the thought process. Turn "I can't run" into, "How lucky am I to be able to run! That my body allows me to run!"'

JENNI
50839

JENNI FALCONER
The presenter, 48, enjoys running so much, that she's set up a podcast called RunPod to encourage other people to share her enthusiasm. Every episode she invites a guest who also loves the exercise to talk training and overcoming challenges.



MEL C
Sporty by name, sporty by nature, Mel C, 50, loves staying active, whether that be with triathlons – which she's been competing in since 2011 – or a casual jog. She says, 'Running is meditation for me now.'

By Daisy Hall, **Pictures** Instagram, Getty, Shutterstock

FREE PERSONALISATION!

Family of Love

PERSONALISED Diamond Bracelet

BGE
David
Susan
James
Sarah

GLEAMING GOLD -PLATING

10 Genuine Diamonds

For each loved one, add their name to this stylish bracelet

Keep the love of family with you always...

Celebrate the Gift of Family with Sparkling Ribbons of Love

The brilliance of genuine diamonds radiates in a beautiful presentation of the love you cherish most... Introducing the exclusive *Family of Love* Personalised Diamond Bracelet – a celebration of the most precious bond of all!

Personalised with the Names of Your Choice...

Exquisitely handcrafted, this stunning bracelet features 10 genuine diamonds set between wave-shaped links plated with 24-carat gold-plated accents. You create a special keepsake by personalising your bracelet with up to 10 elegantly engraved names. The bracelet is adjustable from 7 to 8 inches and features a 24-carat gold-plated accented heart charm at the clasp.

A Remarkable Value... Available for a Limited Time

The *Family of Love* Personalised Diamond Bracelet is available at our remarkable issue price, payable in 4 interest-free instalments of only £32.49 – great value at just £129.96 (plus £9.99 S&S)*. Your bracelet comes ready to wear, in a gift box with Certificate of Authenticity. To order yours, **pay nothing now**; simply complete and return the Priority Order Form today!

Arrives in a custom-design case with a Certificate of Authentcity

FREE

Personalised Engraving

David
Susan
James
Sarah

Each member of the family... as precious as a diamond!

Due to personalisation, this product may not be returned unless faulty. Personalisation max. 10 names per bracelet. Max. 10 characters per name in length © The Bradford Exchange. * S&S - Service & Shipping. A credit check may be carried out by a licensed Credit Reference Agency. Offer applies to UK only
01-10678-001P

FASTEST WAY TO ORDER

www.bradford.co.uk/familyoflovebracelet

***Or call on* 0333 003 0019**

Lines are open: Mon-Thurs 10-6 Fri 9-5 Sat 9-4

and quote reference code 458610

Scan me!

PAY NOTHING NOW

PRIORITY ORDER FORM

Please Respond Promptly

To: The Bradford Exchange Ltd, PO Box 653, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4RA

YES! Please order __(Qty) of the *Family of Love Personalised Diamond Bracelet* for me as described in this advertisement. I need PAY NOTHING NOW!

Complete today or Call 0333 003 0019

Please select 10 names to be engraved on your bracelet for FREE. Complete in block letters (max. 10 characters per name).

Name 1

Name 2

Name 3

Name 4

Name 5

Name 6

Name 7

Name 8

Name 9

Name 10

Title.................. Name...
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address...

....

Postcode.............................. Phone...

Email Address...

Applicants must be aged 18 or over. Please note, we may contact you via mail, email and mobile with information about your reservation. For details of our privacy policy, please go to www.bradford.co.uk/privacypolicy or contact us at the above address or phone number.

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PLUS A PRIZE FOR EVERYONE

www.takeabreakbingo.co.uk/community-cashback

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18+ promotion runs every week of the month. Players who deposit & spend at least £10 during the week are entered into a Community Cashback draw. 3 Star prizes will be awarded to players but all players that qualify will win a set prize each week. A minimum of £10 deposited & spent each week qualifies the player to the draw. Full T&Cs Apply. Please play responsibly. Begambleaware.org

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